DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 438 515 CS 013 880

AUTHOR Iddings, Scott M.; Ortmann, Tammy L.; Pride, Buddy; Pride, Heidi L.

TITLE Improving Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Development through Multiple Instructional Strategies and Technology.

PUB DATE 1999-12-00
NOTE 142p.; Master's Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and IRI/Skylight.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Action Research; Educational Technology; Elementary Education; *Instructional Effectiveness; Language Arts; Parent Participation; Reading Attitudes; *Reading Comprehension; *Reading Improvement; Reading Instruction; *Vocabulary Skills

ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for enhancing reading comprehension and vocabulary development through the use of multiple instructional strategies and technology. The targeted elementary population exhibits both poor reading comprehension and poor vocabulary acquisition and understanding, which interfere with academic achievement. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes standardized test scores, teacher observation, anecdotal records, and school report cards. Analysis of probable cause data revealed a lack of parental involvement, student readiness, learning difficulties, curricular changes, differences in learning, student motivation, self-discipline, insufficient materials, and teacher training. In order to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary development a variety of strategies and educational software were implemented. Surveys were gathered from students' parents and students themselves. End of the year tests from the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years were used to provide data for comparison. A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others combined with the analysis of the problem setting resulted in the selection of five major categories of intervention: vocabulary games, word wall, self-selected reading baskets, parent involvement, and technology. A comparison of data from surveys revealed that an average of 40% of the targeted population improved their attitude toward reading. An analysis of the at-home reading program demonstrated that 74% of the targeted population was reading 60-100 minutes per week at home by the completion of this project. An average of 6 out of 17 students of the targeted population increased at least one reading level, as defined by running records, within their grade range. Analysis of post-test results clearly indicated that the majority of the students were now more successful in reading comprehension and vocabulary development. Teacher researchers strongly recommend the use of multiple instructional strategies and technology when teaching reading and language arts to elementary students. Appendices include a parent reading survey, a Garfield reading survey for children, vocabulary and reading logs, a collection of reading literature, and numerous suggested activities and exercises to develop kids' reading and comprehensive skills. (Contains 50 references.) (Author/RS)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 438 515

IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION AND VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MULTIPLE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND TECHNOLOGY

Scott M. Iddings
Tammy L. Ortmann
Buddy Pride
Heidi L. Pride

An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & IRI/Skylight

Field-Based Masters Program

Chicago, Illinois

December 1999

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
S. Iddings
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

CS 013 880

SIGNATURE PAGE

This Project was approved by

Susan Seaver / Marsha Halma
Advisor

Hugh A. Armistead Ed D
Advisor

Beverly Hadley Ph. D.
Dean, School of Education

ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for enhancing reading comprehension and vocabulary development through the use of multiple instructional strategies and technology. The targeted elementary population exhibits both poor reading comprehension and poor vocabulary acquisition and understanding, which interfere with academic achievement. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes standardized test scores, teacher observation, anecdotal records, and school report cards.

Analysis of probable cause data revealed a lack of parental involvement, student readiness, learning difficulties, curricular changes, differences in learning, student motivation, self-discipline, insufficient materials, and teacher training.

In order to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary development we implemented a variety of strategies and educational software. Surveys were gathered from students' parents and students themselves. End of the year tests from the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years were used to provide data for comparison.

A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others combined with the analysis of the problem setting resulted in the selection of five major categories of intervention: vocabulary games, word wall, self-selected reading baskets, parent involvement, and technology. A comparison of data from surveys revealed that an average of 40% of the targeted population improved their attitude toward reading. An analysis of the at-home reading program demonstrated that 74% of the targeted population was reading 60-100 minutes per week at home by the completion of this project. An average of six out of seventeen students of the targeted population increased at least one reading level, as defined by running records, within their grade range. Analysis of post-test results clearly indicated that the majority of the students were now more successful in reading comprehension and vocabulary development. Teacher researchers strongly recommend the use of multiple instructional strategies and technology when teaching reading and language arts to elementary students.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I - PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT 1

General Statement of the Problem 1

Immediate Problem Context 1

The Surrounding Communities 9

Regional and National Context of the Problem 10

CHAPTER II - PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSE 12

Problem Evidence 12

Probable Causes 15

CHAPTER III - THE SOLUTION STRATEGY 20

Review of the Literature 20

Project Objectives and Processes 25

Project Action Plan 25

Methods of Assessment 28

CHAPTER IV - PROJECT RESULTS 29

Historical Description of the Intervention 29

Presentation and Analysis of Results 38

Conclusions and Recommendations 45

REFERENCES 48

APPENDIX

A PARENT READING SURVEY 51

B VOCABULARY LOG 53

C READING LOG 55

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

D WEEK 4 PARENT INFORMATION - MOMS AND DADS 57

E WEEK 7 PARENT INFORMATION - THE BASICS 62

F WEEK 10 PARENT INFORMATION - ENCOURAGING THE YOUNG READER....66

G WEEK 12 PARENT INFORMATION - THE ABC'S OF READING 72

H BOOK REVIEW CONFERENCE FORM 74

I FRIDAY ACTIVITIES FORM 76

J CHARACTER MAP FORM 78

K RETELLING FORM 80

L BOOK REPORT FORM 82

M CREATE QUESTIONS FORM 84

N MY FAVORITE PART FORM....86

O SILENT SUSTAINED READING LOG 88

P COMPUTER USAGE LOG 90

Q GARFIELD READING SURVEY....92

R FROG AND TOAD RUNNING RECORD 96

S LITTLE RED ROTTEN HOOD RUNNING RECORD 100

T COME BACK AMELIA BEDELIA RUNNING RECORD....102

U IT'S THANKSGIVING RUNNING RECORD....104

V ARTHUR MAKES THE TEAM RUNNING RECORD 106

W RUNAWAY RALPH RUNNING RECORD....108

X OTHERWISE KNOWN AS SHEILA THE GREAT RUNNING RECORD 110

Y THE APPRENTICESHIP OF LUCAS WHITAKER RUNNING RECORD....112

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

Z RUNNING RECORD RECORDING SHEET 114

AA PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE PARENT LETTER 116

CHAPTER I

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of Problem

The students in three targeted elementary classrooms exhibit both poor reading comprehension and poor vocabulary acquisition and understanding, which interferes with academic achievement. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes standardized test scores, teacher observations, anecdotal records, and school report cards.

Immediate Problem Context School A

School A has a total enrollment of 215 students consisting of grades first through fifth. There is one section of self-contained special education within School A. The student population in the school is comprised of various racial-ethnic groups. According to enrollment reports from September 30, 1998, 84.7 percent of the school's population was classified as White. The school has a Hispanic population of 13.0 percent, an African-American population of 2.3 percent, an Asian/Pacific Islander population of 0.0 percent, and a Native American population of 0.0 percent. There are 33.0 percent of students are enrolled in special education classes, with active Individualized Educational Plans. Currently there are 7.0 percent of the students being serviced under Title I Reading. The school's gifted program services 2.0 percent of the students. Finally, 16.3 percent of School A's population has been identified as students who come from low-income families. These families are classified by at least one of the following criteria: families

who receive public aid, live in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, are supported in foster homes with public funds, or are eligible to receive free or reduced-priced lunches.

The faculty of School A for the 1998-1999 school year consisted of nine regular classroom teachers, one part-time physical education teacher, one part-time general music teacher, one part-time art teacher, one part-time band teacher, four special education teachers, one full time speech pathologist, one Title I reading teacher, one reading specialist, one part-time occupational therapist, one part-time physical therapist, one part-time school psychologist, one administrator, one part-time nurse, one part-time social worker, and a support staff of two. The teacher/pupil ratio in the district of School A is 1:18.9 as of September 30, 1998. The classroom teachers in School A's district have an average of 13.6 years of teaching experience. Teachers with a bachelor's degree account for 54.5 percent of the faculty with the remaining 45.5 percent having a master's degree or above. In School A's district, 99.1 percent of the faculty is White, with .6 percent Hispanic and .3 percent Asian/Pacific Islander. School A's district's staff includes 26.7 percent male and 73.3 percent female. The teachers' average salary is $41,745 and the average administrator's salary is $74,123.

School A is located in a middle class, far northwestern suburb of a large metropolitan area in a midwestern state. It has 13 classrooms divided among a two-story building that includes the following: a learning resource center, a combination music/band/chorus room, and one gymnasium. Art is housed in the school's multi-purpose room. This room also serves as the cafeteria at lunchtime. The grounds include a large blacktop area and a small grass area for the playground equipment.

There are a number of programs available to students in School A. Academic programs include: language arts, mathematics, physical education, art, general music, science, social

studies, spelling, reading, Title I, learning disability resource services, speech, and programs for gifted students from grade three and beyond. A number of extra curricular activities are available to the students. School A offers chorus, band (fifth grade students only), and Kid's Club (an after school day care program).

There are one to three field trips per year for each grade level. These special trips correspond to units of study. Yearly special reading incentive programs, such as the 600-minute club sponsored by Six Flags Great America, are offered in School A. School A also has a peer mediation program coordinated by the social workers, a D.A.R.E. program for fifth grade, and a community mentor program.

The promotion-retention policy for School A states that "students who have failed to meet the performance expectation in the academic program as established by the school may be recommended for retention." A recommendation for retention may occur after the following have been considered:

1. Academic work completed during the year.
2. Relation between the ability of the student and the effort of the student.
3. Performance on standardized tests.
4. Performance on expectancy tests.
5. Physical development of the student.
6. Social and emotional development of the student.
7. Attendance of the student.

Immediate Problem Context School B

School B has a total enrollment of 479 students consisting of grades first through fifth. There is one self-contained special education classroom within School B. The student population in the school is comprised of various racial-ethnic groups. According to enrollment reports from September 30, 1998, 76.6 percent of the school's population was classified as White. The school has a Hispanic population of 20.9 percent, an African-American population

of 0.6 percent, an Asian/Pacific Islander population of 1.7 percent and a Native American population of 0.2 percent. There are 22.0 percent of students enrolled in special education classes, with active Individualized Educational Plans. Currently there are 13.0 percent of students being serviced under Title I Reading. The school's gifted program services 3.0 percent of the students. Finally, 15.7 percent of School B's populations has been identified as students who come from low-income families. These families are classified by at least one of the following criteria: families who receive public aid, live in institutions of neglected or delinquent children, are supported in foster homes with public funds, or are eligible to receive free or reduced-priced lunches.

The faculty of School B consisted of 20 regular classroom teachers, three special education teachers, one general music teacher, one part-time band teacher, one art teacher, one physical education teacher, one full time speech pathologist, one part-time speech pathologist, two part-time hearing itinerants, one part-time occupational therapist, one administrator, one part-time nurse, one part-time school psychologist, one social worker, two English as a second language teacher, one Title I teacher, and one reading specialist. The classroom teachers in School B's district have an average of 13.6 years of teaching experience. Teachers with a bachelor's degree account for 54.5 percent of the faculty with the remaining 45.5 percent having a master's degree or above. In School B's district, 99.1 percent of the faculty is White, with .6 percent Hispanic and .3 percent Asian/Pacific Islander. School B's district's staff includes 26.7 percent male and 73.3 percent female. The teachers' average salary is $41,745 and the average administrator's salary is $74,123.

School B is located in a middle class, far northwestern suburb of a large metropolitan area in a midwestern state. It has 21 classrooms divided among a one-story building that

includes the following: a learning resource center with computer lab, a combination music/band/chorus room located in the auditorium, one gymnasium, one art room and a multi-purpose room. The multi-purpose room also serves as the cafeteria. The grounds include large areas of grass for the playground equipment and a small blacktop area for recreational activities. There is also a large wooded area in the back of the school that is available for use by the students and staff.

There are a number of programs available to the students in School B. Academic programs include: language arts, mathematics, reading, spelling, science, social studies, physical education, art, and general music. In addition, Title I, learning disability resource services, English as a Second Language services, speech and programs for gifted students from grade three and beyond are provided. A number of extra curricular activities are available to the students. School B offers chorus and band (fifth grade students only) and Kid's Club (an after school day care program).

There are three or more field trips per year for each grade level. These special trips correspond to units of study. Yearly special reading incentive programs, such as Tracks Across America are offered in School B. School B also has developed a Social Skills Curriculum stressing the importance of accountability, best effort and cooperation. School B provides a Drug Awareness Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program for fifth graders.

The promotion-retention policy for School B states that "students who have failed to meet their performance expectation in the academic program as established by the school may be recommended for retention." A recommendation for retention may occur after the following have been considered:

1. Academic work completed during the year.
2. Relation between the ability of the student and the effort of the student.

3. Performance on standardized tests.
4. Performance on expectancy tests
5. Physical development o the student.
6. Social and emotional development of the student.
7. Attendance of the student.

School A and School B are part of the same unit district. A unit district is defined as a school district composed of grades kindergarten through twelfth grade. This is a district made up of one early learning center, five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The total district enrollment as of September 30, 1998 was 4,672 pupils with 15.0 percent classified as low income and 6.7 percent classified as limited English proficient. The average attendance rate for the school district is 94.7 percent with a chronic truancy rate of 0.4 percent. The student mobility rate is 13.3 percent. In this school district there are 21 administrators. In addition there is a Board of Education consisting of seven elected positions. There are 317 teachers in the district and the average class size is 24.7 pupils. The average operating expenditure per pupil is $6,239.00. The total expenditures for this district are broken into the following categories: 59.3 percent for education, 6.6 percent for operations and maintenance, 4.2 percent for transportation, and 30.0 percent spread among other related school business expenditures. Services for district students include learning/behavior-disabled programs, counseling/social work, speech, physical therapy, psychological testing and evaluations.

In the past there have been several issues of concern in this district's community. The first is funding for the schools. In previous years the community made several unsuccessful attempts to pass a referendum. In 1997 a building referendum passed which allowed for the construction of a new elementary school, improvements to several existing buildings and additions to the existing high school. With the opening of the new elementary school, redistricting was implemented for the 1998-1999 school year.

Immediate Problem Context School C

School C has a total enrollment of 534 students consisting of grades third through fifth. There are no self-contained special education classrooms. The student population in the school is comprised of various racial-ethnic groups. According to enrollment reports from September 30th, 1998, 89.3 percent of the school's population was classified as White. The school has a Hispanic population of 5.4 percent, an African-American population of 1.5 percent, an Asian/Pacific American population of 3.7 percent, and a Native American population of 0.0 percent. There are 9.0 percent of students enrolled in special education classes, with active Individual Education Plans. Currently there are 0.9 percent of students being serviced under Title I Reading. Finally, 3.7 percent of School C's population has been identified as students who come form low-income families. These families are classified as families who receive public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced-priced lunches.

During the 1998-1999 school year, the faculty consisted of 28 classroom teachers, two full-time and one part-time general music teachers, two full-time art teachers, three full-time and one part-time physical education teachers, one part-time band director, one full-time reading specialist, one part-time English as a Second Language teacher, one part-time hearing itinerant, one learning center aide, one computer lab aide, three special education teachers, one administrator, one full-time nurse, one part-time social worker, one part-time psychologist, one part-time speech pathologist, one part-time occupational therapist and a support staff of two. The classroom teachers in School C's district have an average of 7.9 years of teaching experience. Teachers with a bachelor's degree account for 77.0 percent of the faculty with the remaining 23.0 percent having a master's degree or above. In School C's district 98.4 percent of the district is White and 1.6 percent is Asian-Pacific Islander. The staff in School C's district

include 21.4 percent male and 78.6 percent female. The teachers' average salary is $33,337 and the average administrator's salary is $72,846.

School C is located in a fast growing, middle class, far northwestern suburb of a large metropolitan area in a midwestern state. It has 28 regular classrooms divided among a one-story building with six outside mobile classrooms each providing two rooms for instruction. The building includes a learning resource center, a computer lab, a music room, an art room, a cafeteria, and a gym. The grounds include a large blacktop area by the mobile classrooms with playground equipment.

There are a number of programs available to students in School C. Academic programs include: language arts, math, physical education, art, general music, science, social studies, spelling, reading, learning disability resource, English as a Second Language, auditory resource, and speech. School C also provides a band program for fourth and fifth grade students.

Students in each grade level go on one to five field trips a year. These special trips correspond to units of study. Yearly special reading incentive programs have sponsors. Six flags Great America sponsors the 600-minute club. School C also has a D.A.R.E. (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) program for fifth grade students.

The retention policy in School C may be initiated by the parent or teacher. Promotion is determined by student achievement and teacher recommendation.

School C is the second largest of the four schools in the district. The district of School C is a unit district. A unit district is defined as a district composed grades kindergarten through twelfth grade. The district is made up of two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The total district enrollment is 2,081 pupils with 3.3 percent considered low income. The average attendance rate for the district of School C is 95.6 percent with a chronic

truancy rate of .4 percent. The student mobility rate is 16.3 percent. Within the district of School C there are seven administrators. In addition there is a Board of Education consisting of seven elected positions. There are 129 teachers in the district and the average class size is 24.0 pupils. The average operating expenditure per pupil is $5,867.00. The total expenditures for the district are broken into the following categories: 56.5 percent for education, 14.5 percent for operations and maintenance, 5.4 percent for transportation, 7.2 percent for bond and interest, 0.0 percent for rent, 14.5 percent for school and construction/capital improvements, 1.9 percent for municipal retirement/Social Security, and 0.0 percent for fire prevention and safety. Services for district students include learning/behavior-disabled programs, counseling/social work, speech, physical therapy, psychological testing and evaluations.

In the past there have been several issues of concern in School C's district. One issue is funding for new schools. In previous elections the community unsuccessfully proposed referenda to support funding. In fall of 1998 they successfully passed two referenda for two new elementary buildings. In 1995 they passed a referendum for a new middle/high school.

The Surrounding Communities

Schools A and B and C are located in far northwestern suburbs of a large metropolitan area in a midwestern state. All three schools are located in the same county. Schools A and B are located in Community I. School C is located in Community II. Community I, which covers 10.7 square miles, has a population of 18,207, and Community II covers 2.29 square miles and has a population of 3,108. Within the county of these two communities there are several ethnic groups. The majority is White with a population of 175,273, an Hispanic population of 6,066, an Asian/Pacific Islander population of 1,293, an African American population of 310, and an American Indian/Eskimo/Aleutian population of 299. The county and its communities are

served by several religious centers which include: 13 Catholic churches, 14 Lutheran churches, three Episcopal churches, seven Methodist churches, three Presbyterian churches, one Jewish congregation, and 48 other denominational churches.

The majority of both communities is made up of single family homes with some condominiums, townhouses, and rental units. The housing costs vary between the two communities. The average price of a single-family home in Community I is $179,083. In Community II the average price of a single family home is $217,417. The per capita income of the county is $22,753 with a median household income of $51,207. Both communities have many small businesses and a few industrial sites. There is a community college located within the county's boundaries.

Regional and National Context of the Problem

Reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition have been an issue in American education for a number of years. Teachers, parents, and administrators know that reading is the most fundamental skill taught in school. "From the very office of the President of the United States, and resounding through numerous states and school districts, the goal of having every child be able to read with competence and confidence has become a national priority" (McPike, 1998, p. 4). "Recent data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reveal that two fifths of the 1994 sample of fourth grades ages nine to ten failed to demonstrate even a basic level of reading ability" (Taylor, Hanson, Justice-Swanson, Watts, 1997, p. 196). According to the NAEP report, reading performance has remained relatively unchanged since the early 1972 (as cited in "Every Child Reading," 1998).

Of all the possible difficulties one may experience in life, reading problems may be one of the most silent yet pervasive handicapping conditions in our society. Depending on

> various estimates of incidence, it may be projected with some confidence that at least one child in every classroom in the United States has significant problems in learning to read. (Aaron and Joshi, 1992, p. vii).

Reading is a foundation for future success in all academic areas. According to Guillaume (1998), language, including reading and writing, permeates all of the content areas. The Learning First Alliance cited reading failure was, overwhelmingly, the most common reason for retention, special education assignment and long-term remedial services of children (as cited in "Every Child Reading," 1998).

"Early lack of emphasis on reading with children can establish long-term patterns difficult to reverse" (Richardson and Morgan, 1994, p. 23). Reading and interventions should start at an early age and continue throughout their educational experiences.

Our targeted districts, like many districts nationwide, have identified that reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition continues to be a concern in student achievement. Educators are seeing a number of students that are not performing proficiently at grade level in reading. According to the Learning First Alliance, "Our goal is for all healthy children to learn to read well. With what we now know, this country's reading problems are largely solvable if we have the will to solve them." (as cited in "Every Child Reading," 1998, p. 53). Through various interventions, this study will address possible causes and strategies to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition for the future academic success of all students.

CHAPTER II

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSE

Problem Evidence

Evidence for the existence of poor reading comprehension and vocabulary development among students at the determined sites was documented via the students' standardized test results, informal reading and vocabulary assessments, and parent surveys. Evidence was also documented on various students' Individual Educational Plans.

Standardized Test Results

Students at School A were administered the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test at the end of the previous school year. This test measures both reading comprehension and vocabulary and is used to determine eligibility for Title I services. Title I is a federally funded initiative used to improve reading vocabulary and comprehension for grades first through third. Of the 43 students that the test was administered to, 19% were identified to be above average with a stanine score of seven, eight or nine; 42% of the students were identified to be in the average range with a stanine score of four, five or six; and 39% were below average with a stanine score of one, two or three. Based on this information, 19 of the 43 students were identified as the targeted research population for School A.

At School B, 88% of the targeted population was given the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test at the end of the previous year. Twelve percent of the students at School B were

significantly below grade level and were exempted from taking the test. Of the 16 students, six percent of the students were identified to be in the average range with a stanine score of four, five or six; and 94% were below average with a stanine score of one, two or three. The targeted population at School B was also given the Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement. Fifty-six percent of the targeted population at School B scored below the average range with a standard score below 85 on the reading sub-test of the Woodcock Johnson.

At School C, 75% of the targeted population was given a state goal achievement test. Eighteen percent of the targeted populations did not meet the goals while 82% met or exceeded the goals.

Informal Reading and Vocabulary Assessment

At all schools, informal reading assessments were given to determine the reading level of the targeted populations. Reading assessments were used to determine independent, instructional and frustration level of targeted populations.

The targeted population at School A was given the same running record assessment. Of the 21 students assessed, the results of this pre-assessment placed seven students at the frustration level, three students at the instructional level, and eleven students at the independent level. Informal vocabulary assessments were given prior to the intervention indicating the targeted population identified 30% to 50% of the words.

The targeted population at School B was given the same running record assessment. Of the 16 students assessed, the results of this pre-assessment placed eight students at the frustration level, six students at the instructional level, and two students at the independent level. Informal vocabulary assessments were given prior to the intervention indicating the targeted population identified 10% to 20% of the words correctly.

The targeted population at School C was given the same running record assessment. Of the 12 students assessed, the results of this pre-assessment placed eight students at the frustration level, three students at the instructional level, and one student at the independent level. Informal vocabulary assessments were given prior to the intervention indicating the targeted population identified 40% to 60% of the words correctly.

Parent Survey

A survey was given to parents of the targeted populations at Schools A, B, and C to determine the amount of time spent reading at home, the amount of parental involvement and the value placed on reading in each child's home. (Appendix A) Of the 52 surveys, 90% were completed and returned. When asked if their child enjoyed reading, 70% of the parents surveyed replied yes, 26% replied somewhat, and four percent replied no. The targeted populations' parents from Schools A, B, and C reported that 62% spend 0-15 minutes reading independently each day, 28% spend 16-30 minutes reading independently each day, and 11% spend thirty or more minutes reading independently each day. Of the parents surveyed at Schools A, B, and C, 66% spend 0-15 minutes reading with their child, 28% spend 16-30 minutes reading with their child, and six percent spend thirty minutes or more reading with their child each day. When parents were asked if they discussed reading material with their child, 87% replied yes, while 13% replied no. Next, parents were asked how their child would spend thirty minutes of free time. According to the results, 55% responded their child would play outside, 23% would watch television, 21% would play video games, six percent would read, and six percent would partake in other activities. Finally, when parents were asked if they enjoyed reading, 62% replied yes and 30% said somewhat, and six percent replied no. The statistics show that a majority of the targeted populations spend little time reading and discussing what was read.

Probable Causes

In order to grasp the probable causes of poor reading comprehension and vocabulary development among the targeted student population, it is important to understand the severity to which poor reading comprehension skills and vocabulary development affect a student's overall academic performance. "Not having access to the meaning of words representative of the concepts and content of what they read causes difficulty in children's comprehension of texts, limits their ability to make a connection with their existing background knowledge, and inhibits their capacity to make coherent inferences." (Rupley, Logan and Nichols, 1998, p. 336). According to Aaron and Joshi (1992, p. 155), "...unless word recognition has become automatic, it continues to be an attention-demanding process and, therefore, interferes with comprehension."

Parental Involvement and Student Readiness

Educators have long questioned parental support and student preparation for school. Cunningham states, "We have always known that children who were read to came to school more ready, willing and able to read" (Cunningham, 1995, p. 187). "Children from literate homes have over one thousand hours of informal reading and writing encounters before coming to school" (Adams, 1990, p. 33). "In the past decade, however, findings from the emergent literacy research have made it clear that the reading/writing encounters many children have include more than just a bedtime story. Estimates are, that children from literate homes experience almost an hour each day of informal reading and writing encounters" (Cunningham, 1995, p. 187). As students prepare to begin their formal schooling, many can be immediately identified as at-risk due to inadequate parental involvement. The term at-risk is a popular term that describes children who will not learn to read or write well enough to meet a basic level of literacy in order to achieve a high school diploma (Mullis and Jenkins, 1990). Children who are placed in the at-risk group typically receive federally provided remediation programs and

teachers try to meet their needs by placing them in lower reading groups and provide a slower paced curriculum. "Children who are placed in the bottom group in first grade generally remain their throughout their elementary career and almost never learn to read and write up to grade-level standards" (Allington, 1983, 1991, p. 550).

Learning Difficulties

Learning difficulties present another probable cause for poor reading comprehension and vocabulary development. "Learning disabilities are information processing disorders which interfere with academic learning, task oriented behavior, and socialization in otherwise competent individuals" (Latham, P.S. and Latham, P.H., 1993, p. 3). "Children with learning disabilities appear to be slower in developing both metacognitive awareness and strategic approaches to learning, and even with time they may not reach levels comparable to their non-handicapped peers" (Jenkins, et. al, 1987, p. 54). At School A, five percent of the targeted population was identified as learning or language impaired with active Individualized Educational Plans. At School B, 100% of the targeted population was identified as learning or language impaired with active Individualized Educational Plans. At School C, 25% of the targeted population was identified as learning disabled with active Individualized Educational Plans.

Curricular Changes and Differences in Learning

Another probable cause is the American phenomenon of the pendulum swing where various approaches of reading instruction come in and out of fashion (Hall and Cunningham, 1998). In 1990, when Hall and Cunningham began their research on reading, the Whole Language approach was highly recommended. By 1998, this approach was losing favor and school boards were mandating phonics-based approaches. "The search for the 'best way to teach

reading' denies the reality of individual differences. Children do not all learn in the same way, and, consequently, approaches with particular emphases are apt to result in some children learning to read and others not. When the pendulum swings to another approach, we may pick up some of those who weren't faring too well under the previous emphasis but lose some who were" (Hall and Cunningham, 1998, p. 131-132). As cited by Bond and Dykstra in a study thirty years ago, "First grade studies which were carried out to determine the best approach concluded that the teacher was more important than the method but that, in general, combination approaches worked better than and single approach" (1967, p. 28).

Student Motivation and Self Discipline

According to Glasser (1992), a major reason why so few students are involved in high quality honors or advanced placement classes is because of the boss-management system. A boss-management system believes that people are motivated by outside forces and fails to understand that motivation comes from within one's self. Students who lack motivation to practice reading, "lose ground in vocabulary, in comprehension, in advanced thinking skills, even in the ability to write." (Kropp, 1996, p. 145).

Insufficient Materials and Teacher Training

Teachers play an influential role in students' academic growth. Insufficient materials and lack of teacher training play a vital role in classroom instruction and reading development. "Time, materials, and resources should be provided so that each student reads both high-interest, non-frustrating texts as well as materials that are slightly more difficult in vocabulary or linguistic, rhetorical, or conceptual structure in order to both consolidate and advance the student's capabilities." (Anonymous, 1998, p. 2). According to Cunningham, Hall and Defee (1998), research indicates that every effort should be made to provide students with a wide

variety of books in various genres and ability levels. Choices can be limited by the availability of reading materials and the willingness of children to read from the available resources.

> There have been numerous successful experimental studies in which teachers have been trained to increase the academic achievement of their students. In these studies which have taken place in regular classrooms, one group of teachers received training in specific instructional procedures and one group continued their regular teaching. In the successful studies the teachers implemented the training, and as a result, their students' had higher achievement and/or higher academic engaged time than did the students in the classrooms of the untrained teachers. (Rosenshine, 1983, p. 5).

Teachers must prepare prior to teaching students reading material. Often teachers determine that reading text is too difficult for their students and will simply avoid it. "Teachers may not know what to do when they can tell that text is difficult for their students, and may resort to avoidance tactics in desperation." (Richardson and Morgan, 1994, p. 89). When teachers avoid text material they are helping contribute to the literacy problem described in a number of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports. (Richardson and Morgan, 1994, p. 89). American students are passive learners who are not motivated to read. "By avoiding text books, teachers may be contributing to the very problem that their profession is supposed to be solving." (Richardson and Morgan, 1994, p. 89).

Many students experience difficulty as they acquire vocabulary and learn to read with comprehension. Five significant factors have been identified which appear to hinder a student's ability to acquire vocabulary and read with comprehension. The factors are parental involvement and student readiness, learning difficulties, curricular changes and learning differences, student motivation and self-discipline and insufficient materials. Fortunately there

are a variety of strategies that can be implemented to enhance reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.

CHAPTER III

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

Research shows that there are a variety of causes for students who possess low reading abilities. The same literature also provides an assortment of classroom solutions to implement. These action researchers will explore possible solutions to the causes inherent to the school setting. The following themes will be examined: vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, parental involvement, and the use of technology.

Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary development plays an essential role in a child's ability to improve their reading comprehension. "One of the longest, most clearly articulated lines of research in literacy education describes the strong connection between readers' vocabulary knowledge and their ability to understand what they read." (Davis, 1968, p. 499). The development of vocabulary has long been an important concern to researchers as they have found that knowledge of word meaning has a strong relationship to reading comprehension (Olle and Bazeli, 1996). Olle and Bazeli also say that the use of concrete visual methods will aid in the development and improvement of vocabulary and reading comprehension. Therefore, it seems evident that a child who possesses a strong vocabulary base would have a greater ability to comprehend what they are reading.

According to Blachowicz and Fisher, there are seven statements supported by vocabulary research.

The Seven Statements supported by Vocabulary Research

1. Immerse students in words
2. Encourage students to be active in making connections between words and experiences.
3. Encourage students to personalize word learning.
4. Build on multiple sources of information.
5. Help students to control their learning.
6. Aid students in developing independent strategies.
7. Assist students in using words in meaningful ways; meaningful use leads to long-lasting learning.

(Blachowicz and Fisher, 1996, p. 7)

"There are many ways to organize the vast quantity of research that exists on vocabulary instruction. With the understanding that instruction will vary based on what the learner already knows and the level of knowledge that is needed for understanding, we can tease out a few aspects of good classroom instruction." (Blachowicz and Fisher, p. 6).

Research based strategies used to focus on certain strengths and weaknesses might include vocabulary logs, vocabulary games and word wall lessons.

- Vocabulary Logs - a system of tracking unfamiliar vocabulary words that a student encounters while reading. Traditionally, the student would write down the word, where it was found, a brief definition, and a sentence using that word. However, vocabulary logs offer a flexibility "to allow students to choose their own level of learning and to design a more personal log," stated Blachowicz and Fisher (p. 71).
- Vocabulary Games - motivating activities for students to rehearse vocabulary and offer a variety of models. Some models include matching card games (like Rummy or Fish), race-and-chase board games like Parcheesi, memory board games (such as

Concentration), and bingo. The researchers, utilizing unit and curriculum vocabulary words, created all of these games.

- Word Wall lessons - an area in the classroom where students write words they encounter through books, TV, conversation, or any other daily experience. This encourages students to actively watch and listen for new words and share them with their peers. (Blachowicz and Fisher, 1996).
- Self-Selected Reading - "Where the student engages in uninterrupted reading of a book of his/her choice is one of the most important strategies for increasing fluency, vocabulary, and overall reading ability. Students need to do lots of reading of easy books for pleasure to become fluent, confident readers." (Routman, 1991, p. 396).

Reading Comprehension

According to numerous research articles, there is no greater effect on students' comprehension than a strong vocabulary base.

Children who are good readers encounter greater amounts of text than do poor readers. Thus, better readers are exposed to more words and are able to access a greater number of meanings from context than their classmates who are experiencing reading difficulties. They learn the meanings of a greater number of words incidentally, making further reading easier. On the other hand, struggling readers experience a negative cycle. They begin with a smaller reading vocabulary, are exposed to less text, and encounter fewer words. In addition, it is likely they will be less able to make efficient use of context to derive the meanings of new words, thereby minimizing their ability to expand their reading vocabulary incidentally. This results in an ever-widening gap between good and poor readers. Stanovich has dubbed this process the 'Matthew Effects' alluding to the

passage from the book of Matthew, that states that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer (Kuhn and Stahl, 1998, p. 121).

Current research suggests that reading comprehension is strongly tied to vocabulary acquisition and word meaning. "Vocabulary development has been an important concern to some researchers as they found knowledge of word meaning has a strong relationship to reading comprehension." (Olle, R. and Bazeli, M., 1996, p. 12). According to Oakhill and Garnham (1988), only 10% of school children possess adequate decoding skills, yet they still have limited comprehension.

Furthermore, some research suggests that the use of visual aides greatly assists in reading comprehension while also assisting in vocabulary acquisition and retention. "Using key vocabulary words as a structural basis for a mind-mapping activity regarding a particular story cannot only enhance the recognition and meaning of words, but also enhance the comprehension." (Olle, R. and Bazeli, M., 1996, p. 16).

Parental Involvement

"Parents are the first and most important influence on a child's life." (Wlodkowski and Jaynes, 1990, p. 16). According to Wlodkowski and Jaynes, the formative effect parents have on a child has an impact at every stage of development and on their motivation to learn. "During the early elementary years parental influence significantly affects a child's attitude toward academic areas such as reading." (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Burow, 1995, p. 436). Benjamin Bloom supplies vivid evidence for the types of impact parents possess. His research team conducted in-depth interviews with very successful young professionals (ages 28 - 35) that were highly recognized in competitive occupational fields. His team found that the single most common characteristic of their general education and subsequent achievement was enthusiastic

parent involvement. Parents need to be kept informed in order to produce successful children. Preparing a child for reading or learning to read is an area where many parents feel inadequate. As stated in Invitations, "many parents need guidance in choosing books for children or in helping their child choose." (Routman, 1991, p. 488). "Probably most important is getting the message out that parents should continue to read to their children, serve as reading role models themselves, and provide quiet time and space for leisure reading. (Routman, 1991, p. 487).

Use of Technology

Technology can play a key role in the student's motivation to read. "Technology has a motivational factor that will frequently interest students who would be reluctant to learn in other ways. Put a computer mouse in a kid's hand and you have instant motivation." (Blachowicz and Fisher, 1996, p. 22). If technology plays such an important role in motivation, then it seems evident that "... teachers need to be attuned to the latest in technological advances to make the best use of available resources for vocabulary instruction." (Olle, R. and Bazeli, M., 1996, p. 13).

Not only does technology increase motivation, but word meaning may be enhanced as well. McNabb and Ausburger (1996, p. 7) state, "Technology can assist the teacher in setting up literacy learning events that allow students to actively engage in constructing the meaning of a given text." The acquisition and retention of word meaning can be enhanced through the use of hypermedia technology. "Hypermedia technology invites young readers to participate in simulated worlds that connect meaning with abstract word symbols." (McNabb and Augsburger, 1996, p. 10). Specifically, according to Medwell (1998, p. 7), talking books "... clearly helped children to improve their reading of traditional print books and the evidence from their retellings and error analysis suggests that talking books particularly help children to understand the meanings of the stories, rather than teaching them word recognition."

As technology becomes more and more prevalent in classrooms, "The use of computers for reading development offers much potential." (Olle, R. and Bazeli, M., 1996, p. 15).

Project Objectives and Processes

The objective of this study is to improve reading through the use of multiple strategies and technology. In order for the terminal objective to be accomplished, the following process objectives are necessary:

1. Parents will be well informed about reading improvement goals and will be given helpful suggestions on how to help at home.
2. Strategies such as vocabulary logs, word wall activities, vocabulary games, self-selected reading, attitude surveys, and running records will be implemented to help improve vocabulary acquisition and reading.
3. The students will have access to computers several times each week.
4. A percentage of students in each action researchers' class will have individualized instruction on the computer.
5. Students will be exposed to a variety of software programs throughout the intervention.
6. The classroom environment will help motivate students to read.

Project Action Plan

Upon review of various literature, it is evident that a multi-faceted approach is necessary to address the various needs of children at a variety of levels. "Effective reading instruction requires that a teacher recognize multiple goals for reading instruction, and that different means are required to reach these multiple goals." (Stahl and Duffy-Hester, 1998, p. 351). A multi-

faceted approach should address each student's needs at his/her level while providing a stimulating and motivating environment for reading.

Action Plan Outline

I. Improve reading vocabulary acquisition

A. Implement vocabulary logs (Appendix B)

B. Provide word wall lessons (three to five times each week, weeks one through twelve)

C. Instruct and use vocabulary games (weeks one through twelve)

II. Measure parental involvement

A. Administer parent reading survey (Appendix A, prior to interventions)

B. Monitor weekly at-home reading logs (Appendix C, weeks one through twelve)

C. Send monthly newsletters with home help suggestions for parents (Appendices D - G, weeks four, seven, ten, and twelve)

III. Increase time-on-task during self-selected reading

A. Make self-selected reading baskets (prior to implementation)

B. Implement self-selected reading program (weeks one through twelve)

C. Conference with each student using the Book Review Conference Form (Appendix H, weeks one through twelve)

D. Use weekly activities for improvement of Sustained Silent Reading comprehension (Appendices I - N, weeks one through twelve)

E. Monitor self-selected reading folders and self-selected reading logs monthly (Appendix O, weeks one through twelve)

IV. Improve reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition through technology

A. Select software programs with a reading/vocabulary component (prior to implementation)

B. Evaluate programs and design lessons utilizing each software's strengths (prior to implementation)

C. Implement software lessons during a six week period (weeks six through twelve)

D. Monitor weekly exposure to software programs (Appendix P, weeks six through twelve)

E. Evaluate effectiveness of technology intervention (weeks thirteen through fourteen)

V. Assess students' feelings about reading

A. Administer the Garfield Reading Attitude Survey prior to intervention (Appendix Q)

B. Re-administer the Garfield Reading Attitude Survey at conclusion of interventions (Appendix Q, week thirteen)

VI. Assessments of reading progress.

A. Administer Running Records prior to interventions (Appendices R - Y)

B. Re-administer Running Records at conclusion of interventions (week thirteen)

C. Administer Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test at Schools A and B (weeks following intervention period)

D. Administer the Stanford Achievement Test at all locations with the exception of students with individual educational plans at all schools

E. Administer Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement to students with individual educational plans that were exempt from the Stanford Achievement Test

F. Administered state standards assessment test at School C

Methods of Assessment

The targeted classrooms will use a variety of assessment tools to monitor student growth. Weekly reading logs and computer usage logs will be implemented and monitored. Reading attitude surveys will be conducted at the beginning and conclusion of the interventions to assess students' attitudes and feelings towards reading. Local assessments, such as the Gates-MacGinitie and Running Records will be administered to ascertain individual student's growth. The Stanford Standardized Achievement Test and the state goals achievement test will be utilized as well.

CHAPTER IV

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition among students in a variety of classrooms ranging from second grade to fifth grade. Varying degrees of student, parent, and teacher involvement were necessary in order to achieve the desired results. An educational program focusing on the use of running records, vocabulary games, Word Wall activities, self-selected reading baskets, a monitored home reading study plan, and technology were selected to promote increased reading comprehension and vocabulary development. Other components of the project included a parent survey, pre and post student reading attitude surveys, and local and standardized test results.

Running Records

At the start of this project, the students in the targeted classrooms were given an informal running record assessment (Appendices R - W) to determine their current level of reading achievement. The running record assessments were developed from familiar children's literature that was based on grade appropriate reading levels. The assessment consisted of approximately a one hundred-word passage which students orally read directly from the book while the administrator documented errors, self-corrections, and fluency. Upon completion of the oral reading, the administrator asked a variety of comprehension questions regarding the text.

The running record gave information regarding the students reading ability. If the student obtained a percentile score of 95 to 100, he/she was reading at an independent level. A percentile of 90 to 94 placed the student in the instructional level. A percentile score below 89 meant that the student was reading at his/her frustration level.

Vocabulary Games

A variety of vocabulary games were created to improve the acquisition and understanding of new vocabulary words used in thematic units. These games were used weekly. Word Wizard, Memory, Charades, RIVET (Cunningham, 1995), and various word puzzles were used. Word Wizard was a game that required students to give clues (definitions, synonyms, and antonyms) to a student who had an unknown vocabulary word taped on his/her back. After receiving a number of clues, the student came to the teacher with their prediction of the word. Memory was a word matching game, which required students to match words to pictures or definitions. During Charades students were given a vocabulary word that they needed to act out in order for the class to identify the unknown word. RIVET was an activity developed by Patricia Cunningham (1995) which focused students' attention on the length and spelling of words as students were introduced to new words. Word searches, cloze exercises, and crossword puzzles were also used for vocabulary development.

Word Wall

A Word Wall was created in each participating classroom. In Schools A and B, the words consisted of high frequency words. In School C, the words were based on the thematic units being used in the classroom. The Word Wall was arranged alphabetically with an introduction of five new words weekly. Daily twenty-minute Word Wall lessons were provided. During these lessons, students were given the opportunity to use various modes of learning such

as kinesthetic, visual, and auditory. These modes were used to enhance their learning and understanding of the words.

Self Selected Reading Baskets

In each participating classroom, self-selected reading baskets were developed containing reading material at varying grade levels to be used during self-selected reading time. The books were color coded to represent the span of reading levels in the classroom. There were three groups in each classroom. The books coded with green dots were for the students who were reading above grade level. The yellow coded books were for the students who were reading at grade level. The students who were reading below grade level were coded with blue dots. The running record assessments were used to determine the type of book each child should read. Each child was given a folder with the corresponding color to document his/her daily reading (Appendix O). Students were required to document the date and title of what they read Monday through Thursday for the twenty minutes of self-selected reading time. On Friday, each student was required to complete a comprehension activity for a book that was read during that week (Appendix I - N). During the self-selected reading time the teacher would conference with individual students about what they were reading on a rotating basis. The baskets were rotated weekly with the generation of new baskets every four to five weeks.

Parent Involvement

The parent involvement intervention was designed to encourage and increase parent participation in the home reading program. The types of parent involvement sought were parents' signatures on weekly reading logs documenting time read independently by the child or read in the presence of a parent, and reading and implementing home correspondence.

Technology

The technology intervention was designed to be used with a small, heterogeneous group of students at each site. Each group consisted of five to six students of varying reading abilities. Permission was obtained from parents for student participation (Appendix BB). Various software programs, focusing on comprehension and vocabulary acquisition, were selected and implemented to meet the needs of the targeted groups of students. A specialist in educational technology provided some direct instruction with each group of targeted students, as well as consultation services to the classroom teacher.

The targeted group of primary students at School A had limited access to computers and technology. The classroom consisted of two computers and a mini-lab of seven computers in the learning resource center. The students at School A utilized: WiggleWorks, Earobics Plus Step 2, and Computer Curriculum Corporation (CCC) Reading. WiggleWorks (1994) is a software program created to support language development by using a variety of activities that integrate reading, writing, listening and speaking. It was designed to encourage students to become independent readers and writers. (WiggleWorks Software User's Guide, 1994) Earobics Plus Step 2 (1998) is a multi-media auditory development and phonics program from Cognitive Concepts, Inc. The program teaches auditory processing and phonemic awareness skills for speech and language development and academic success. CCC Reading (1998) evaluates and assesses students' comprehension at their individual reading level.

The targeted group of intermediate special education students at School B had access to a computer lab of 18 computers for 90 to120 minutes per week. The students at School B utilized Earobics Plus Step 1, Reader Rabbit's Reading 2, and computer generated slide shows. Earobics Plus Step 1 (1998) is a multi-media auditory development and phonics program from Cognitive

Concepts, Inc. The program teaches auditory processing and phonemic awareness skills for speech and language development and academic success. Reader Rabbit's Reading 2 (1998) is a software program that allows students to become more aware that words are made up of sounds and that sounds go together to make meaning (Reading 2 Integration Manual, 1998). Slide shows were created with words that were listed on the classroom Word Wall as well as for the unit vocabulary words for reading, science and social studies. Each slide show contained ten to twenty words that students practiced reading independently. Students were monitored and tested prior to advancing to the next slide show.

The targeted group of intermediate students at School C had access to a computer lab of 30 computers for 50-60 minutes per week. The students at School C utilized the CornerStone Reading Vocabulary published by SkillsBank, Corp. (1998). This program contains 140 varied lessons that reinforce 1,100 vocabulary words, plus 2,000 supplementary words, to support student success in reading, writing and other content areas.

Surveys

A total of two surveys were created and used during the action research project. They included one parent survey, that was administered once, and a student survey that was administered twice.

At the beginning of the project, the parents of all the students were given a survey to complete. This survey provided the researchers with information regarding the parents' current perception of their child's reading ability and the student's reading habits at home. The information gleaned from the survey (Appendix A) was used to determine probable cause and to identify strategies that should be employed in the classroom. Of the 52 surveys, 90% were

completed and returned. When asked if their child enjoyed reading, 70% of the parents surveyed replied yes, 26% replied somewhat, and 4% replied no.

The targeted populations' parents from Schools A, B, and C reported that 62% spend 0-15 minutes reading independently each day, 28% spend 16-30 minutes reading independently each day, and 11% spend thirty or more minutes reading independently each day (see Figure 1).

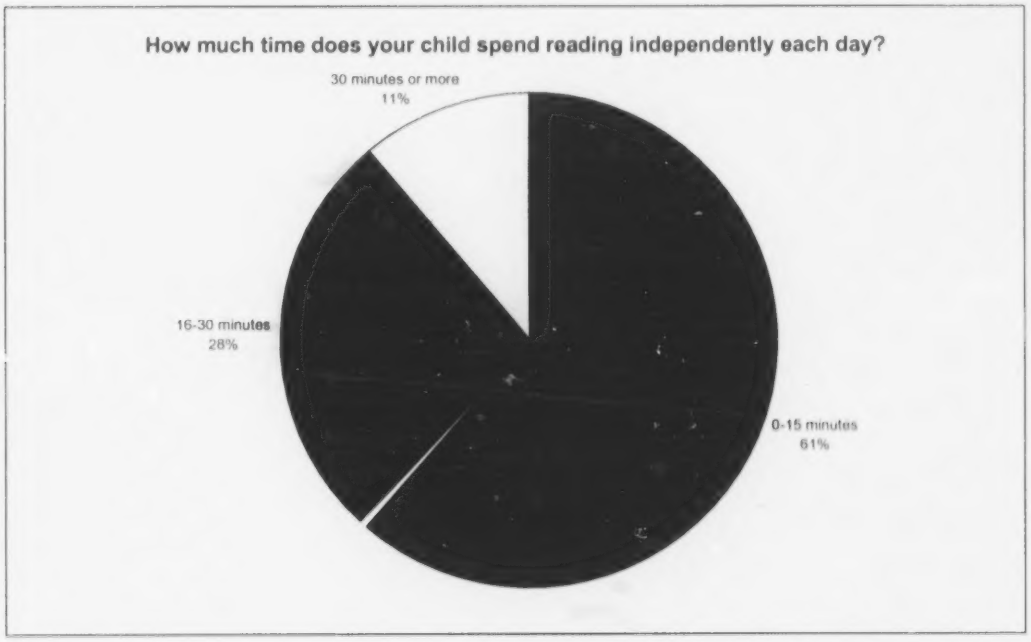


Figure 1. Comparison of minutes read by students each day in all 3 targeted classrooms.

Of the parents surveyed at Schools A, B, and C, 66% spend 0-15 minutes reading with their child, 28% spend 16-30 minutes reading with their child, and 6% spend thirty minutes or more reading with their child each day.

When parents were asked if they discussed reading material with their child, 87% replied yes, while 13% replied no (see Figure 2).

Next, parents were asked how their child would spend thirty minutes of free time. According to the results 52% responded their child would play outside, 21% would watch

television, 19% would play video games, 4% would read, and 4% would partake in other activities.

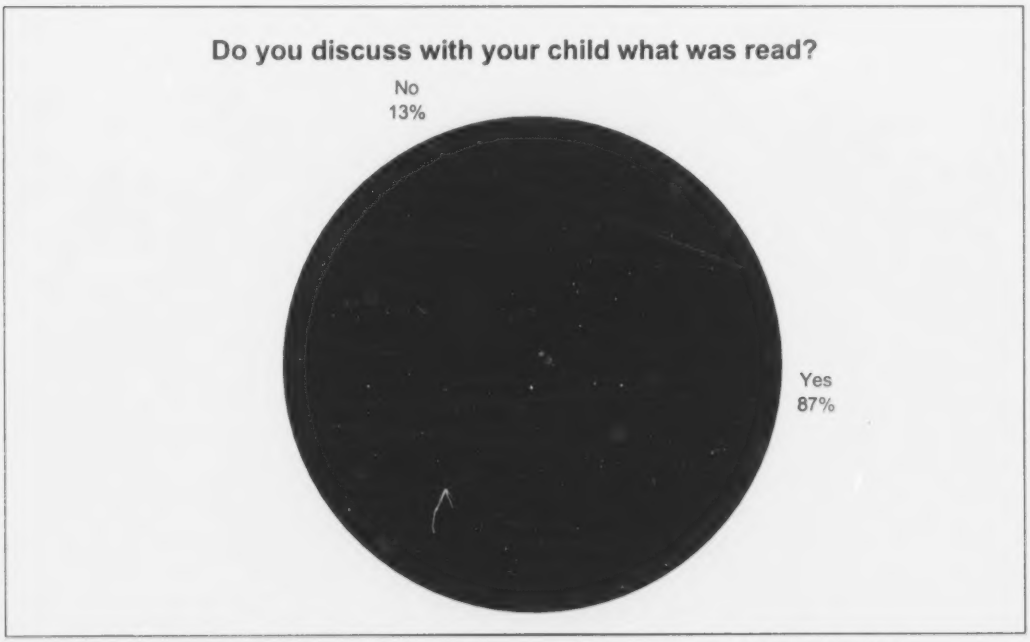


Figure 2. Percentage of parents who discuss reading at home with their child.

Finally, when parents were asked if they enjoyed reading, 62% replied yes and 32% said somewhat, and 6% replied no. The statistics show that a majority of the targeted populations spend little time reading and discussing what was read.

The students were given a survey to complete prior to the implementation of the interventions and again upon completion of the interventions (Appendix Q). This survey provided the researchers with information regarding each student's attitude toward recreational and academic reading. At School A, 21% of the targeted population surveyed demonstrated a more positive attitude toward reading, 16% of the students' attitudes remained the same, while 63% showed a more negative attitude toward reading. At School B, 73% of the targeted population surveyed demonstrated a more positive attitude toward reading, while 27% showed a more negative attitude toward reading. At School C, 62% of the targeted population surveyed

demonstrated a more positive attitude toward reading, 19% of the students' attitudes remained the same, while 19% showed a more negative attitude toward reading. These researchers concluded that the increase of negative attitudes expressed by students' from School A was attributed to false responses given by students seeking teacher approval at the beginning of the school year.

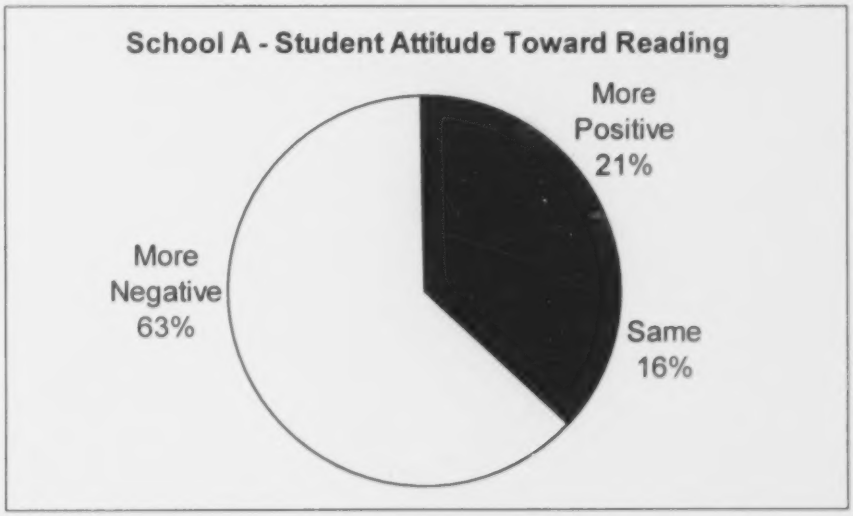


Figure 3. Post-test results of students' attitude toward reading at School A.

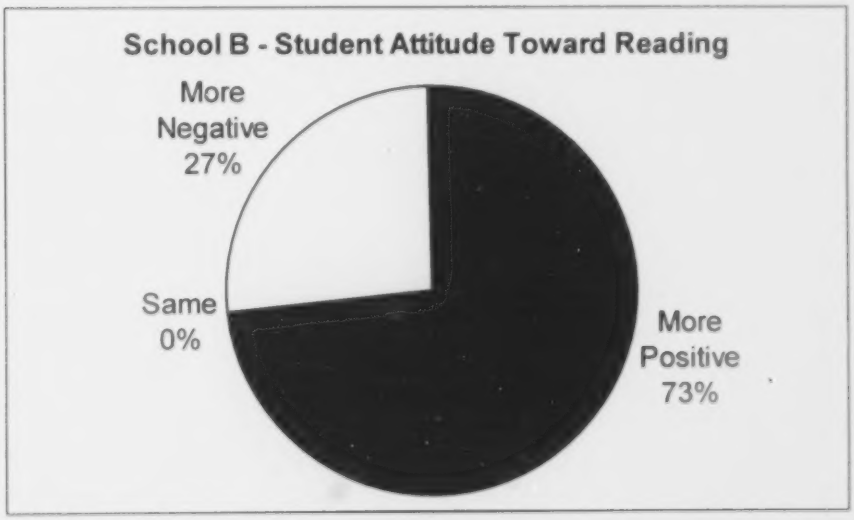


Figure 4. Post-test results of students' attitude toward reading at School B.

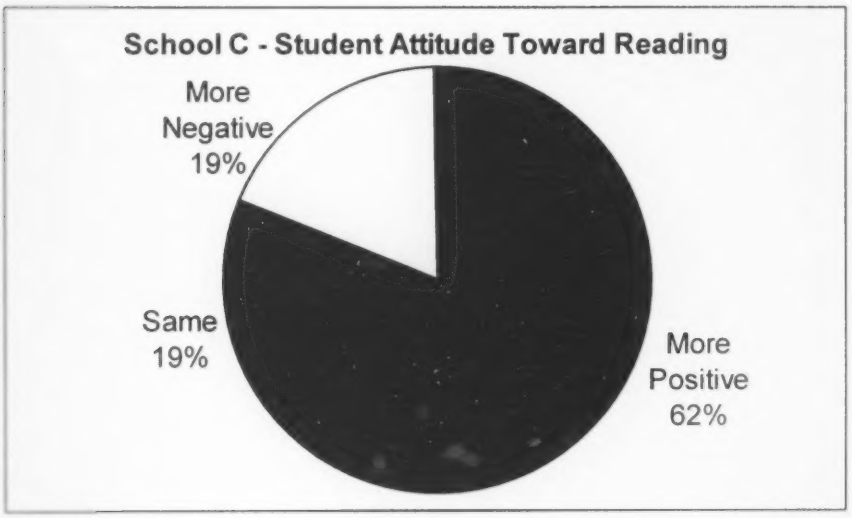


Figure 5. . Post-test results of students' attitude toward reading at School C.

Home Correspondence/Reading Program

This program was created to foster positive and consistent reading habits in the students. Parental involvement was a component of this program. A letter (Appendix AA) was sent to the parents explaining the reading plan and requesting their participation and assistance in its implementation.

Information was provided monthly to parents regarding techniques and suggestions for improved home reading programs or reading skills (Appendices D - G). Each participant implemented the use of Schoolnotes.com (1998) to enhance classroom communication with parents regarding reading strategies, vocabulary, and classroom events.

As part of their home reading program, students were required to read between 60 to 100 minutes per week depending on their grade level. Reading logs documented the title of material read, independent or partner reading, length of time read, parental comments, and signature of parent or guardian. Reading logs were collected weekly and monitored by the research participants (Appendix C).

Standardized Tests

The Stanford Achievement Test is a nationally normed test that assesses children in math, reading, spelling, language and environment. The tests are given at benchmark grade levels in School A's school district.

The Gates MacGinitie Reading Test is a local assessment that measures reading comprehension and vocabulary development at Schools A and B.

The Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement is a test that was administered to the students at School B. The Woodcock Johnson is a comprehensive set of tests for measuring cognitive ability and achievement. For the project the reading sub-tests' standard scores were utilized.

The state standards assessment test was used at School C. This test had recently been redesigned which may impact the comparison of scores from previous years.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess the productiveness of specifically taught vocabulary and reading comprehension skills and the home/school reading program for the students, the following assessments were utilized: running records, standardized testing, conferencing about Self-Selected Reading, attitude surveys and parental surveys.

Running Records

The results of the pre- and post-running records for School A are presented in Figure 6. Initially 21 students were given the pre-running record assessment. All students at School A were given the same assessment. The results of the pre-assessment placed seven students at the frustration level, three students at the instructional level and 11 at the independent level. Upon completion of the interventions, 19 of the original 21 students were given the post-running

record assessment. Two of the students at School A moved during the time of the research project. The results from the post-running record indicated that two remained at the frustration level, one was at the instructional level, and 16 were at the independent level. One of the students that remained in the frustration level was identified during the course of the intervention as being learning disabled in reading.

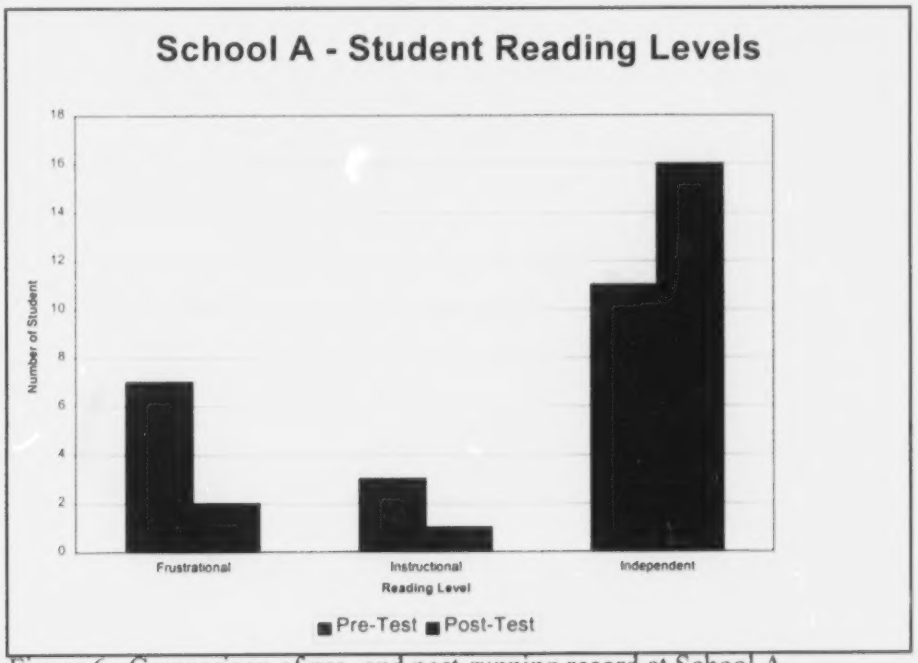


Figure 6. Comparison of pre- and post-running record at School A.

The results of the pre- and post-running records for School B are presented in Figure 7. Initially 16 students were given the pre-running record assessments. Students were given an assessment at their identified reading level. The students' previous teachers' recommendations, current teacher's observations and Individualized Educational Plans determined the students' reading levels. The results of the pre-assessment placed eight students at School B at the frustration level, six at the instructional level and two at the independent level. Upon completion of the intervention, 15 of the original 16 students were given the post-assessment. Four students

remained at the frustration level, six were at the instructional level and five were at the independent level.

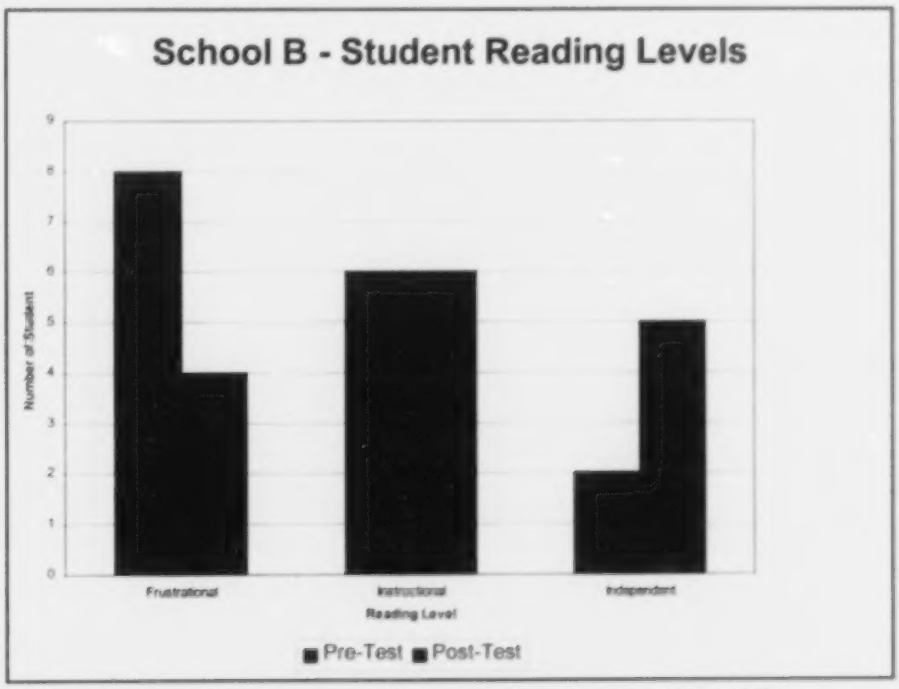


Figure 7. Comparison of pre- and post-running record at School B.

The results of the pre- and post-running records for School C are presented in Figure 8. Initially 12 students were given the pre-running record assessment. Students were given an assessment at their identified reading level. The student's previous teachers' recommendations and the current teacher's observations determined the students' reading levels. The results of the pre-assessment placed eight students at School C at the frustration level, three at the instructional level and one at the independent level. Upon completion of the intervention, the original 12 students were given the post-assessment. Two students remained at the frustration level, three were at the instructional level and seven were at the independent level.

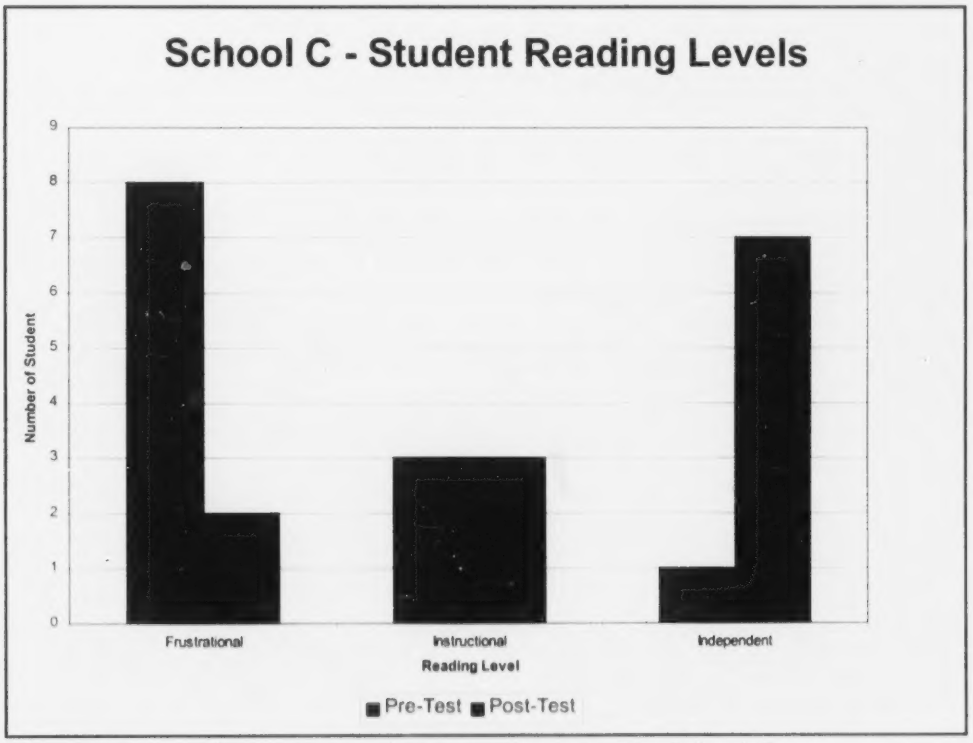


Figure 8. Comparison of pre- and post-running record at School C.

Vocabulary Games

Motivation and understanding of key vocabulary words were improved at all sites through the implementation of weekly vocabulary games. Improved unit test scores and standardized tests indicated that students retained and applied their understanding of vocabulary terms more consistently than in previous units. Pre- and post-test scores at School A improved from an average pre-test score of 40% correct to an average post-test score of 90%. At School B, students improved from an average pre-test score of 15% correct to an average post-test score of 74%. Students at School C improved from an average pre-test score of 50% correct to an average post-test score of 90%. These results document improved vocabulary understanding and usage.

Word Wall

The daily Word Wall lessons gave students the opportunity to use various modes of learning which improved recognition, usage, spelling, understanding and vocabulary development. Improved standardized test scores, weekly spelling tests and spelling during written work indicated that students were actively applying skills learned during the Word Wall lessons.

Self-Selected Reading

Conferencing between students and teacher suggested that students at School A, School B and School C benefited from the use of conferencing about books read from the reading baskets. Increased enthusiasm, improved reading fluency, enhanced reading comprehension, extended time on task and an exposure to a variety of genre were observed to be beneficial to the students at all sites.

Weekly comprehension activities (Appendices I - N) were gathered and authentically assessed to document growth. Improved understanding of the elements of a story such as : characters, setting, problems and solution were noted at School A, School B and School C. Students at all sites demonstrated improved responsibility and took a pro-active role in their education that improved their overall reading comprehension.

Parent Involvement In-Home Reading Program

During a twelve-week in-home reading program students were required to read 60-100 minutes per week depending on their grade level, verified by a signature of a parent or legal guardian. Parent involvement was documented on a weekly basis on the home reading log (Appendix C).

At School A, 37% of the targeted population turned in a reading log that met all of the requirements for each of the twelve weeks. Twenty-one percent turned in ten or eleven reading logs, and 16% turned in eight or nine. Another 16% turned in six or seven reading logs. Ten percent turned in fewer than six reading logs.

At School B, 50% of the targeted population turned in a reading log that met all of the requirements for each of the twelve weeks. Thirty-eight percent turned in ten or eleven reading logs, and six percent turned in nine. Six percent turned in fewer than six reading logs.

At School C, 56% of the targeted population turned in a reading log that met all of the requirements for each of the twelve weeks. Thirteen percent turned in ten or eleven reading logs, and six percent turned in six or seven. Twenty-five percent turned in fewer than six reading logs.

Technology

At School A, the students that received additional technological intervention demonstrated improved enthusiasm for reading and vocabulary acquisition. Standardized test scores and running records indicate that the additional technological intervention helped three out of six students' reading ability to improve.

At School B, the students that received additional technological intervention demonstrated improved enthusiasm for reading and vocabulary acquisition. Standardized test scores and running records indicate that the additional technological intervention helped five out of six students' reading ability to improve.

At School C, the students that received additional technological intervention demonstrated improved enthusiasm for reading and vocabulary acquisition. Standardized test scores and running records indicate that the additional technological intervention helped five out of six students' reading ability to improve.

Standardized Testing and Local Assessments

Students at School A were given the Stanford Achievement Test and the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test. The Stanford Achievement Test was given in the spring near the conclusion of the intervention period. Results indicated that reading scores increased from the previous year from an average national percentile rank of 53 to 61. Language results showed that percentile results decreased slightly from 63 to 62. Finally, spelling results showed an increase in percentile ranks from 47 to 57.

Gates MacGinitie scores were compared using stanine scores. A stanine score of seven, eight or nine was considered above average, while a stanine score of four, five or six was considered average. A stanine score of one, two or three was below average. Scores from the previous school year were compared to the scores obtained during the intervention period. Results indicated that there was a ten percent increases in the above average stanine (19% to 29%). The number of average stanine scores increased by 11% (42% to 53%). The number of students with a below average stanine score decreased 21% (39% to 18%).

Students at School B were given the Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement and the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test. The reading sub test scores of the Woodcock Johnson Test of achievement were compared using standard scores. A standard score of 85 to 115 was considered average. Scores from the previous school year were compared to the scores obtained after the intervention period. The number of standard scores falling below the average range decreased from 56% to 31%. This indicates a 25% gain in the targeted population.

Gates MacGinitie scores were compared using stanine scores. A stanine score of seven, eight or nine was considered above average, while a stanine score of four, five or six was considered average. A stanine score of one, two or three was below average. Scores from the

previous school year were compared to the scores obtained during the intervention period. Results indicated that zero- percent of the targeted population was above average. The number of average stanine scores increased by 19% (6% to 24%). The number of students with a below average stanine score decreased 19% (94% to 75%).

School C is located in a state that has developed a statewide standards-based assessment which is administered at grades three, five and eight. The reading comprehension test was administered for the first time during the research period. Therefore, these researchers could not adequately show student growth using this testing method because there were no comparison scores. However, this test does indicate that 75% of the targeted students met or exceeded the state expectation for this assessment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After review of current research on the topic of reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition and analyzing the site data, the researchers designed an action plan based on the use of multiple instructional strategies and technology to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary development. Upon examining the results of this project, those aspects proved to be essential to the achievement of the terminal objective. The researchers found that the targeted students improved their attitude toward reading, comprehension and their overall vocabulary acquisition.

The use of running records was useful for the researches and documented growth throughout the intervention period. The running records were easy to develop and met the needs of the individual students in the project.

The use of vocabulary games improved motivation and comprehension of the literature they were engaged in. Students at School A, B and C showed a significant improvement on post-test scores.

A major element in the success of this project was the use of self-selected reading baskets. Having materials at each student's independent reading level encouraged participation and enthusiasm for reading. Weekly comprehension activities held students accountable for the reading and were useful assessment tools for the researchers.

The researchers found that prior to the implementation of this project, 62% of the targeted populations spent 0-15 minutes reading independently and spent little time discussing what was read with their parents. Upon completion of the project, a majority of the parents reported increased time independently reading and improved discussion of text between parent and child. This was also evidenced by the completion of home reading logs documenting 60 to 100 minutes of reading per week, confirmed by a parent's signature.

One of the strategies most liked by the students was the use of technology. The technology portion of the intervention was used with six students at each school. Researchers found this component of the project to be the most difficult to implement. Implementation of the project began at a difficult time of the school year. There were numerous days spent on standardized testing, parent-teacher conferences, end-of-the-year testing, frequent release days and schedule disruptions such as assemblies and field trips. School A reported difficulty scheduling computer time in the computer lab. When the technology consultant was able to work in the classroom, the additional students and limited space interfered with the effectiveness of the intervention. At School B, the researchers found scheduling time for the technology consultant to be incompatible with the availability of the lab. Although the students were able to

consistently work in the computer lab, the targeted population noted the absence of the technology consultant. At School C, the researchers reported that it was difficult to monitor and keep the targeted population on schedule.

Despite these difficulties, all the students who participated in the technology portion showed increased motivation towards reading. Although these same students also showed significant growth in reading and vocabulary development, these results could not be attributed to the use of technology due to lack of pre-intervention data. Improved reading and vocabulary scores were documented through the use of running records, tests, and teacher observations. This experience would indicate the use of technology in reading and vocabulary acquisition was beneficial. Researchers felt that a technology component in reading should be implemented early in the school year to intrigue and motivate students.

The researchers would strongly recommend the use of a variety of instructional strategies and technology when teaching reading comprehension and vocabulary lessons. Building a student's reading attitude and skill level is extremely important and future successes or failures of the student's hinge upon the student's ability to read and understand the text. Types of interventions mentioned in the paper need to be implemented the entire year in order to see maximum impact. Overall, the researches felt that the targeted population benefited from the various instructional strategies used in this project.

REFERENCES

Aaron, P.G. & Joshi, R.M. (1992). Reading Problems: Consultation and remediation. New York: The Guilford Press.

Adams, M.J. (1990). Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print. Cambridge, Massachusettes: MIT Press.

Allington, R.L. (1983). The Reading Instruction Provided Reading of Differing Reading Ability. The Elementary School Journal, 83, 549 - 559.

Allington R.L. (1991). Effective Literacy Instruction for At-Risk Children in Better Schooling for the Children of Poverty: Alternatives to Conventional Wisdom. Berkley, Ca.: McCutchan. 9 - 30.

Anonymous (1998). Reading report raises hopes. Reading Today, 15 (5), 1,4.

Basics, The: Where Our Children Learn [Online]. (1992). Available: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Succeed/pt4.html [1997, September 14].

Blachowicz, C. & Fisher P. (1996). Teaching Vocabulary in all Classrooms. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Blume, J. (1986). Otherwise Known as Shelia the Great. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Incorporated.

Bond, G. L. & Dykstra, R. (1967). The Cooperative Research Program in First Grade Reading Instruction. Reading Research Quarterly, 2, 5-142.

Brown, M. (1998). Arthur Makes the Team. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

Computer Curriculum Corporation Reading [Computer Software]. (1998). Sunnyvale, California: Computer Curriculum Corporation. [version 5.1 Windows]

Cornerstone Reading Vocabulary [Computer software]. (1998). Baltimore, Maryland: SkillsBank Corporation.

Cunningham, P.M. (1995). Phonics They Use: Words for Reading and Writing. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.

Cunningham, P.M., Hall, D.P. & Defee, M. (1998). Nonability-grouped, multilevel instruction: Eight years later. The Reading Teacher, 51 (8), 152-164.

Davis, F.B. (1968). Research and comprehension in reading. Reading Research Quarterly, 3, 499-544.

DeFelice, C. (1996). The Apprenticeship of Lucas Whitaker. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.

Earobics Step 1 [Computer software]. (1998). Cambridge, Massachusettes: Cognitive Concepts, Incorporated. (Macintosh version 2.1).

Earobics Step 2 [Computer software]. (1998). Cambridge, Massachusettes: Cognitive Concepts, Incorporated. (Windows/Macintosh version 1.1)

Every Child Reading: An Action Plan of the Learning First Alliance. (1998). The Professional Journal of the American Federation of Teachers, 22, (1 & 2), 52 - 63.

Glasser, W. (1992). The Quality School: Managing students without coersion. New York: Harper Perennial.

Guillaume, A.M. (1998). Learning with text in the primary grades. The Reading Teacher, 51 (6), 476-486.

Hall, D.P. & Cunningham, P.M. (1998). Month-by-Month Phonics for Second Grade. Greensboro, N.C.: Carson-Dellosa Publishing. 131 - 147.

Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., Bassler, O.C. & Burow, R. (1995). Parents' reported involvement in students' homework: strategies and practices. The Elementary School Journal, 95 (5), 435-450.

Jenkins, J., Heliotis, J.D., Stein, M.L., Haynes, M.C. (1987). Improving reading comprehension by using paragraph restatements. Exceptional Children, 54 (1), 54-59.

Kropp, P. (1996). Raising a Reader: Make your child a reader for life. New York: Doubleday.

Kuhn & Stahl (1998). Teaching children to learn word meanings from context. Journal of Literacy Research, 30 (1), 121.

Latham, P.S. & Latham, P.H. (1993). Learning Disabilities and the Law. Washington, D.C.: J.K.L. Communications.

Loebel, A. (1979). Frog and Toad All Year. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

McKenna, M.C. & Kear, D.J. (1990). Measuring attitude toward reading: a new tool for teachers. The Reading Teacher, 43, 626 - 639.

McNabb, M.L. & Augsburger, D. (1996). A vygotskian approach to using hypermedia to enhance reading. The IAECT Journal, 3 (1), 7-11.

McPike. E. (1998). The Unique Power of Reading and How to Unleash It. The Professional Journal of the American Federation of Teachers, 22, (1 & 2).

Medwell, Jane (1998). The Talking Books Project: Some Further Insights into the use of Talking Books to Develop Reading. Reading, 32 (1), 2 - 7.

Mullis, I.V.S. & Jenkins, L.B. (1990). Reading Report Card. 1971-1988. U.S. Department of Education.

Oakhill,J. & Garnham, A. (1988). Becoming a Skilled Reader. Oxford: Blackwell.

Olle, R. & Bazeli, M. (1996). Linking visuals with vocabulary development in the middle school. The IAECT Journal, 3 (1), 12 - 17.

Parish, P. (1983). Come Back Amelia Bedelia. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Prelusky, J. (1982). It's Thanksgiving. New York: Scholastic, Incorporated.

Reader Rabbit's Reading 2 [Computer software]. (1998). Minneapolis, Minnesota: The Learning Company. (Macintosh Version 1.0, Ages 5-8).

Reader Rabbit's Reading 2 Integration Guide. (1998). Minneapolis, Minnesota: The Learning Company.

Richardson, J.S. & Morgan, R.F. (1997). Reading to Learn in the Content Areas. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing.

Rosenshine, B. (1983). Teaching functions in instructional programs. The Elementary School Journal, 83 (4), 5-21.

Routman, R. (1991). Invitations. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann Publishing.

Rupley, W.H., Logan, J.W. & Nichols, W.D. (1998-1999). Vocabulary instruction in a balanced reading program. The Reading Teacher, 52 (4), 336-346.

SchoolNotes.com [Online]. (1998). Copernicus Interactive, Incorporated. Available: http://www.schoolnotes.com [1999, February - May]

Stahl & Duffy-Hester (1998). Everything you wanted to know about phonics, but were afraid to ask. Reading Research Quarterly, 33 (3).

Taylor, B.M., Hanson, B.E., Justice-Swanson, K., Watts, S.M. (1997). Helping struggling readers: Linking small-group intervention with cross-age tutoring. The Reading Teacher, 51 (3), 196-209.

Weber, L. (1993). On My Own. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company.

Wiggleworks, Level C [Computer software]. (1994). New York: Scholastic, Incorporated.

Wiggleworks Software User's Guide. (1994). New York: Scholastic, Incorporated.

Wlodkowski, R.J. & Jaynes, J.H. (1990). Eager to Learn. San Francisco: Josey Bass.

APPENDIX A

PARENT READING SURVEY

READING SURVEY

1. Does your child enjoy reading?

   Yes Somewhat No

2. How much time does your child spend reading independently each day?

   0 – 15 minutes 16 – 30 minutes 30 minutes or more

3. How much time do you spend reading with your child each day?

   0 – 15 minutes 16 – 30 minutes 30 minutes or more

4. Do you discuss with your child what was read?

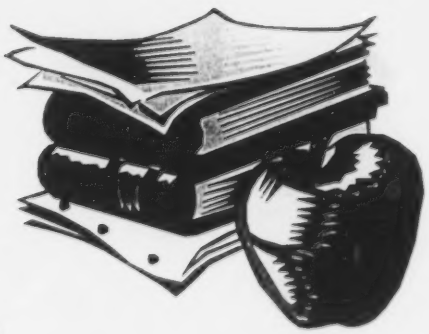
   Yes No

5. If your child had 30 minutes of free time, what activity would they choose most often?

   play outside watch T.V. read a book play video/computer game other

6. Do you enjoy reading?

   Yes Somewhat No



APPENDIX B

VOCABULARY LOG

_____'S VOCABULARY LOG

WORD	DEFINITION	PICTURE

APPENDIX C

READING LOG

_____'s Homework Reading Log

Title and Author	Title and Author	Title and Author
❑ by myself ❑ with adult	❑ by myself ❑ with adult	❑ by myself ❑ with adult
Title and Author	**Title and Author**	**Title and Author**
❑ by myself ❑ with adult	❑ by myself ❑ with adult	❑ by myself ❑ with adult

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Parent Signature: _____ Week of _____

APPENDIX D

WEEK FOUR PARENT INFORMATION - MOMS AND DADS

Moms and Dads

1. Listen to your child.
2. Correct poor grammar and speech.
3. Have your child read orally for short periods of time every day.
4. Take your child to the library.
5. Read to your child.
6. Let your child see you reading.
7. Monitor TV watching.
8. Look at the papers that come home from school.
9. Set aside a special place where your child can display schoolwork.
10. Encourage story writing, keeping a diary or writing letters to friends or relatives.
11. Help your child practice math facts.
12. Give your child small responsibilities at home.
13. Make up simple story problems to solve.
14. Have your child write out your grocery list.
15. Take an interest in school activities.
16. LET YOUR CHILD KNOW YOU CARE!!!!

How You Can Help Improve Your Child's Test Performance

A. The Night Before the Test

1. Make sure your child doesn't go to bed angry.

2. Plan ahead to stay away from problems before the test. For example, it would help to avoid talking about a child's overuse of the phone or avoidance of chores. Your child could stay upset about the argument and not do as well on the test.

3. Keep the rules of the house. Stopping normal discipline or upsetting the usual routine of the home may confuse your child. This may affect how well your child can perform the next day.

4. Consider talking about the test to reassure and encourage your child. At the same time, don't dwell on the subject, as you may cause your child to worry unnecessarily.

5. Let your child know that you know tests can be hard, but that taking them provides a chance to show how well he or she can do. The test will help the teacher understand what your child needs to learn.

6. Be encouraging. If you say, "You'll probably blow this one," your child will expect failure.

7. Consider playing an educational game like Scrabble or Twenty Questions to help your child get into the testing spirit.

B. The Morning of the Test

1. Have your child get up early enough to avoid hurrying. Being on time for school is important.

2. Have your child eat a good breakfast -- but not a heavy one. Don't force your child to eat, though. If he or she is very nervous, too much food could cause illness.

3. Have your child dress in something he or she likes, that others like, and that is familiar. Being comfortable is important. New clothes or new shoes that pinch will be distracting.

4. Don't appear unconcerned about the testing. While your child needn't be *afraid* of tests, he or she needs to understand the importance of testing.

5. Be positive when you send your child to school. Let the child know that you understand that tests can be hard, but that they are not designed to "punish" him or her. Tests are very much for showing what your child *needs* to know as well as what he or she already knows.

C. After the Test

1. Reward your child for trying hard on the test. You might treat him or her to a special

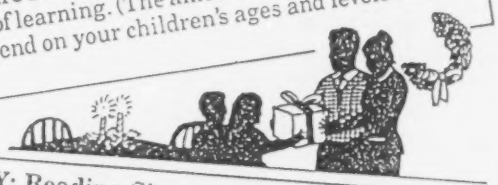
IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES FOR LEARNING AT HOME FROM YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER AND THE EDITORS OF SCHOLASTIC NEWS

PARENTS' PAGE

The Gift of Learning

The holidays are here—and you and your children are no doubt very busy. Remember that you can turn the events and activities of this special time into learning experiences.

Here are some suggestions for giving your children the gift of learning. (The amount of guidance you give will depend on your children's ages and levels of ability.)



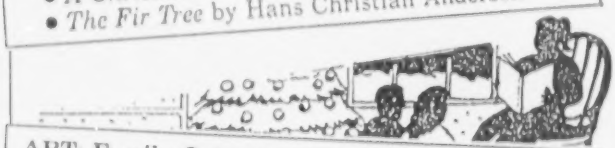
SAFETY: Reading Signs

If you are traveling in a car during the holidays, you might like to play this game. Ask your children to look for the safety signs along the way and to explain what each sign means. You will be helping your children learn about safety—and sharpen their reading skills as well.

STORYTELLING: Holiday Book List

Share these holiday books with your children. Encourage older children to read the books aloud and younger children to interpret the illustrations.

- *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens
- *The Fir Tree* by Hans Christian Andersen



ART: Family Calendar

Make a family calendar for 1984. Assign different months to each family member. Feature one member of the family—be it Grandma, your cat, the twins, Uncle Ned—for each month. The calendars would be a perfect forum for household rules, emergency phone numbers, inside family jokes, birthdays, and other special occasions.

Suggested Materials: Light-weight cardboard, crayons, markers, poster board, paper bags, ribbons, photos—anything you can find around the house.

FOLLOWNG DIRECTIONS: Holiday Recipe

Help develop your children's reading and sequencing skills by working together on a holiday treat. Try this recipe for latkes—the traditional potato pancakes served at Hanukkah.

1. Wash, pare, and grate 3 large (and raw) potatoes. Strain.
2. Grate 1 small onion.
3. Beat 3 eggs well.
4. Measure 1 teaspoon of salt and 2 tablespoons of flour. Combine all ingredients thoroughly.
5. Heat vegetable oil in a pan—about 2" deep. Drop spoonfuls of potato mixture into hot fat.
6. Fry on both sides.
7. Drain on paper towels. Makes 18 pancakes.

Serve hot or cold with sour cream or applesauce.

HEALTH: Stress Tip

One of the most stressful times of the year is the holiday season. So it's important for children to get plenty of rest, dress warmly if the weather is cold, and try not to eat too many sweets. As a family, make a list of holiday health tips.

HOLIDAY GRAB BAG

Wait! Don't stop yet! Use your creativity to think of other activities or expand on the following suggestions:

- Check out new computer software or create your own.
- Help your children make a holiday gift list and budget.
- Take children on a holiday shopping trip. You may also want to discuss the advantages of homemade gifts. These gifts are often the most meaningful to the recipients and need not be expensive.
- Write thank-you notes to each member of the family. These notes may be read after holiday dinners.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Art: Eric Barnes

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PARENTS' PAGE

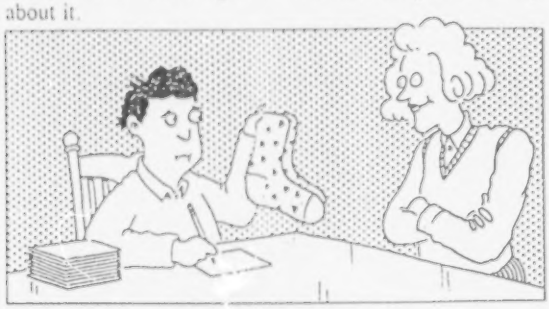
HOLIDAY FAMILY ACTIVITIES

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
BEST WISHES FOR A
WONDERFUL NEW YEAR!

Even after the parties, the presents, the outings, the family visits, the breaking-in of new toys and games, most parents still face a perennial question during December vacations. Children are bound to ask: "What is there to do now?" Surprise your children. Be ready with an array of interesting language activities. Such activities can be fun, provide a change of pace, and help children warm up for school — all at the same time! Here are some suggestions.(You will, of course, have to make them more or less complex depending upon the age of your child.)

THANK-YOU NOTES

Would your children almost prefer not to receive holiday presents rather than have to write thank-you notes to all those friends and relatives? Make the task easier and more fun. Have them decorate the borders of 13-cent postcards with holiday designs. Then have them write one or two thoughtful sentences. Remind your children to be specific about the giver and the gift. (You might have them write: "Thank you very much for the useful _____ . it goes very well with my _____ ." Then, have the child write something personal: "I hope Uncle Willie is feeling better.") Even if the child does not particularly like the gift, he or she should be encouraged to find something nice to say about it.



PERSONAL ADDRESS BOOKS

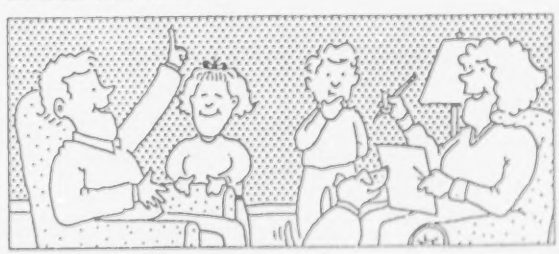
Have your children list the names of the people they owe thank-yous to. Then, have them put the names in ABC order, printing or writing them neatly — leaving space to fill in the addresses. Children can copy the addresses from your address book, the return addresses on cards or packages, or from the phone book. Children can bind their lists in construction paper or oak tag and have their own personal address books. Encourage them to keep in touch with distant friends and relatives after the holidays are over.

HOLIDAY "THEATER"

The entire family might enjoy putting on their own version of "The Night Before Christmas," reworking it to apply to your own preparations for Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa (the Afro-American holiday). The "play" can be as simple or as complicated as time and inclination allow. (For example, sound effects of Santa's reindeer on the roof can be provided using kitchen utensils.)

NEW YEAR "TIME CAPSULE"

Discuss the idea that the new year brings new hopes, dreams, and beginnings. Ask your children to tell some of their wishes and hopes for the new year. Then give each family member a chance to write privately five things they think (or hope) will happen during 1985. Keep the papers sealed and in a safe place until next December 31. Then read the predictions aloud as a group to find out who was the most accurate seer.



FAMILY RESOLUTIONS

As a family, set some group goals or plans for the coming year — a vacation to take together, hiking trips, parties, redecorating the family room, planting a garden, cleaning out and reorganizing the attic or storage room. Make a list, assign dates, and see how well the whole family can work together and live up to its New Year's resolutions.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX E

WEEK SEVEN PARENT INFORMATION - THE BASICS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Helping Your Child Succeed in School - November 1992

The Basics

Where Our Children Learn

At Home

It's no surprise to anyone that children need time with their parents. And even though most parents are extremely busy, whether they work outside of the home or not, they do find time to spend with their children. But they want that time to count in helping prepare their children for the world they will find outside the home.

What counts most is what we *say* and *do at home* , not how rich or poor we are or how many years of school we have finished. When children can count on getting attention at home, they have a greater sense of security and self-worth. This will help them do better not only in school, but also when they grow up.

If you think about it, school, while very important, does not really take up very much time. In the United States, the school year averages 180 days; in other industrialized nations, the school year can extend up to 240 days, and students are often in school more hours per day. So, the hours and days a child is *not* in school are important for learning, too.

Communicating. This is probably the most important activity we can do in our home, and it doesn't cost anything. Ask questions, listen for answers. These are no-cost, high-value things to do.

Think of conversation as being like a tennis game with talk, instead of a ball, bouncing back and forth. Communication can happen any time, any place--in the car, on a bus, at mealtime, at bedtime.

When our children enter and continue school with good habits of communication, they are in a position to succeed--to learn all that has to be learned, and to become confident students.

Starting early. Here are some things you can do when your children are young:

- Let them see you read, and read to them and with them. Visit the library. If they are old enough, make sure they have their own card. Keep books, magazines, and newspapers around the house.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- Keep pencils and paper, crayons, and washable markers handy for notes, grocery lists, and schoolwork. Writing takes practice, and it starts at home.
- Teach children to do things for themselves rather than do the work for them. Patience when children are young pays off later.
- Help children, when needed, to break a job down into small pieces, then do the job one step at a time. This works for everything--getting dressed, a job around the house, or a big homework assignment.
- Develop, with your child, a reasonable, consistent schedule of jobs around the house. List them on a calendar, day by day.
- Every home needs consistent rules children can depend on. Put a plan into action, and follow through.
- Give each child an easy-to-reach place in which to put things away.
- Set limits on TV viewing so that everyone can get work done with less background noise.
- Watch TV *with* your children and talk about what you see.

Handling homework. These are the messages to get across to your children about homework:

- Education is important. Homework has to be done. Let children know that this is what you value.
- Try to have a special place where each child can study.
- Help your children plan how to do all the things they need to do--study, work around the house, play, etc.
- Let your children know that you have confidence in them. Remind them of specific successes they have had in the past perhaps in swimming, soccer, cooking, or in doing a difficult homework assignment.
- Don't expect or demand perfection. When children ask you to look at what they've done--from skating a figure 8 to a math assignment--show interest and praise them when they've done something well. If you have criticisms or suggestions, make them in a helpful way.

The time we spend exchanging ideas at home with our children is vitally important in setting the tone, the attitudes, and the behaviors that make the difference in school.

In the Community

In many parts of our nation, the ties among neighbors have been weakened. For the sake of our children, they need to be rebuilt, and you can help. Be sure to introduce your children to your neighbors. You might even try a "child watch" program where adults who are home during the day keep an eye out for children when they walk to and from school and stand at bus stops.

Some schools are helping families connect with the community by, for example, becoming centers for social services as well as for education. Getting to know your child's school can help you, in a very real way, get to know a major part of your community. It can also help you build a network of wider community support for your family.

At School

Parents can become involved with the schools in several different ways, by working with children at home, volunteering, sharing information, and helping to make policy. We need to remember that what works in one community (or for one family) may not necessarily work in another.

It may no longer be possible for parents to volunteer often for school activities. However, working with children at home and sharing information with the school are two things all parents can do.

The section after the activities, "Parents and the Schools," has some suggestions on how to get the most out of talking to your child's teacher. Many teachers say they rarely receive information from parents about problems at home. Many parents say they don't know what the school expects of their child. Sharing information is essential, and both teachers and parents are responsible for making it happen.

With our help, our children can become confident students, able to handle the challenges of school. This means:

- Talking with our children about the value of hard work and about the importance of education;
- Talking about what's happening in school;
- Reading report cards and messages that come from school;
- Going to school and meeting with teachers;
- Taking part in school events when you can; and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- Finding out about resources in the community.

What Our Children Learn From Us

Sometimes we think that all our children need to know to be ready to start school are the ABCs and how to count. The reality is that most children can learn these things pretty fast once they get to school. What they do need--and what you can give--is the message that education is valuable: through education, people can shape their own future.

So, talk about learning, share the fun and excitement of new skills. Show your children that you are always learning, too. Read aloud, play games, and talk about events around the block and around the world.

Children tend to follow the examples set for them. When we say one thing and do another, children watch and learn. When we practice what we preach, children watch and learn.

The bottom line is that when we give our children the support and information they need, and expect them to do well, they do better in school and in life.

How Our Children Learn From Us

Children need active, even noisy, learning as well as quiet learning such as reading. Active learning includes asking and answering questions (and trying to get more than just "yes" or "no" answers); solving problems; and discussing a variety of topics.

Active learning can also take place when a child plays sports, spends time with friends, or goes to a museum or zoo. The active learning suggestions in the next section will help you think of even more things for you and your children to do.

Limit TV watching. Watching TV is an example of a quiet activity that children *can* learn from, but one that is a problem in almost every home. We know that children who watch a lot of TV learn less and get lower grades than students who watch little TV. And in international comparisons, U.S. students rank high in watching TV, but are near the bottom in doing homework. The result is that U.S. students know less than those in other countries.

Encourage active learning. What can we do? We can listen to our children's ideas and respond to them. We can let them jump in with questions and opinions when reading books together. When this type of give-and-take between parent and child happens at home, a child's participation and interest in school increases.

What Messages To Send

Three of the important messages our children need about success in school can be sent by:

1. **Sharing our own experiences and goals** with our children, because children tend to adopt our ideals. They need to know how we feel about making an effort, working hard, and planning ahead.

2. **Establishing realistic, consistent family rules** for work around the house so our children can develop schedules and stable routines. Children need limits set even though they will test these limits over and over again. Children need to know what they can depend on--and they need to be able to depend on the rules we make.

3. **Encouraging our children to think about the future**. Our children need realistic, reasonable expectations, and they need the satisfaction of having some of these expectations met. They need to take part in making decisions (and to learn that sometimes this means sacrificing fun now for benefits later) and they need to find out what happens as a result of decisions they have made.

Throw a stone into a pool and the circles widen and overlap. None of us lives in isolation. The circles of home, community, and school overlap also. For our children to learn and thrive, they need the support and encouragement of all of the circles in which we live. But the circle in the center is the home and that's where it all starts.
-###-

(Introduction)

(Activities)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX F

WEEK TEN PARENT INFORMATION - ENCOURAGING THE YOUNG READER

ENCOURAGING THE YOUNG READER

Grades Three through Six

Building Stories

Stories are built in much the same way that houses are. Just as houses have floors, walls, and a roof, stories have some basic parts. Every story has *characters* (the people or animals in the story), a *setting* (the time and place the story occurs), a *problem* (a difficulty that the character(s) have to overcome and solve), and a *resolution* (a solution to the difficulty or problem). Knowing the parts of a story helps children understand the whole story.

What you'll need:

- ☐ A brief story or a fable.

What to do:

- ☐ Choose a short story, fable, or fairy tale for your child to read. You may want to read the story ahead of time to make sure it works for this activity.
- ☐ Make an outline on lined paper with the following parts:

  Title: _____

  Main character: _____

  _____

  Setting: _____

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

_____

Problem: _____

_____

_____

Resolution: _____

_____

- ☐ Ask your child to read part of the story and to identify the character(s). Say, "Is Molly a character in the story? Is she a main character? Yes, the story is mostly about Molly and her science project. Let's write that on the sheet where it says **main character**."

- ☐ Then ask your child to tell you where and when the story takes place (a town or city, state or country, today or in the past). This is the **setting** of the story.

- ☐ Then, after your child reads about half of the story, stop and say, "What is the problem the main character of this story is facing or having? Let's write that on the sheet where it says **problem**."

- ☐ When your child finishes the story, ask the child how the problem in the story was worked out. Say, "That is the **resolution**of the story. Let's write that on the sheet."

The One-Minute Dash

Reading quickly and with ease is very important to successful reading, but, like running, it requires a lot of coaching and practice. To become a fluent reader, your child must practice

reading quickly. Remember, however, that too much practice at one time is not helpful.

What you'll need:

- ☐ A watch or clock with a second hand and a book. Your child must be able to read the book with little or no help.

What to do:

- ☐ Tell your child, "Let's play a game called the one-minute dash. I want to see how many words you can read in one minute." (Point to a place in the book where the child should begin reading.)

  Then, "When I say Go, I want you to begin reading. After one minute, I'll tell you to stop." When your child is ready to start, say, "Get ready. . . Set. . . GO!" Check your watch. After a minute, ask your child to stop reading.

  Count the total number of words your child read. If you like, make a chart to show how many words per minute your child has read in a week, two weeks, a month, or more.

Word Wizard

Learning about words is important to learning inside and outside school. The more words a child knows, the more the child will learn.

What you'll need:

- ☐ A newspaper, magazine, or book. A notebook.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What to do:

- ☐ Have your child find a word in a newspaper, magazine, or book that he or she does not know and has not seen before. For example, your child may not know the word **foretell** (meaning "to predict or tell beforehand," as in, "The woman in red could **foretell** the future").

- ☐ Your child might also find a word that is familiar but used in a new way. For example, the word **boat** means a small vessel used for getting around by water. However, when **boat** is used in the sentence, "The people were all in the same **boat**," it means "faced with the same problems."

- ☐ Ask your child to listen for a new word in everyday talk or look for a new word in the newspaper. Have your child find a new word or an old word used in a new way each day. Ask your child to keep track of the words in a special notebook.

In Laughing Order: The Comic Strips

When children read about events, they must keep the major actions in order. Children can develop a sense for order while reading comic strips.

What you'll need:

- ☐ Your child's favorite comic strip.

What to do:

- ☐ Find a comic strip that you and your child enjoy. Before reading the strip, cut it out and separate the frames. Mix them up and ask your child to put the frames in the correct order. Once they are in order, have your child read the comic strip and tell you what the strip means or is saying.

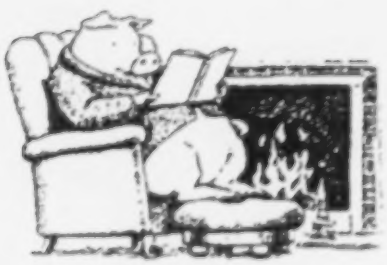
Tall Tale Retell

Children love to read and talk about tall tales--stories about events, people, and places that are bigger than life and not real.

What you'll need:

- ☐ A book of tall tales (ask your librarian for help in finding a tall tale book).

What to do:



- ☐ Have your child choose a tall tale to read. Ask your child to read it silently. Then ask your child to tell you how the tall tale reminds him or her of something that has happened in real life--at home, at school, or in the news.
- ☐ At another time, ask your child to tell you what the story is about--but ask your child to add something to the story that was not in the original story. Tell your child that you are going to be listening very carefully to guess the part of the story your child made up! Try to figure out the "tall tale" part that your child added to the story.

Word Families

Words come in all shapes and sizes, but many words that children read and hear come in word families.

What you'll need:

- ☐ Pencil and paper.

What to do:

- ☐ Give your child a word (such as **add**) that is found in many other words (such as **addition** and **adding**). Ask your child to think of other words that are "roots" for related words, such as **compete**, and ask the child to write out the related words (**competition**, **competitor**, **competitive**).
- ☐ Ask your child to keep a record of the "word families." See how many words made from root words your child can find in a month.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Word Webs

Words can be used to describe other words. Everyone likes to play with words and use words to talk about other words.

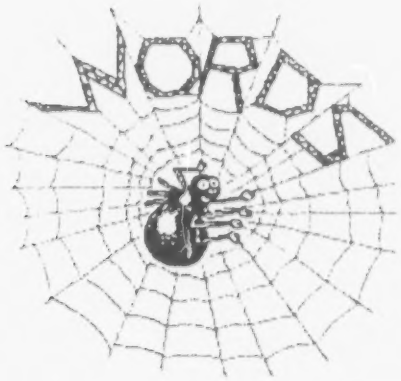
What you'll need:

- ☐ Paper and pencil.

What to do:

- ☐ Choose a word such as **vehicle** and write it in the center of a sheet of paper. Then ask your child to think of other words that tell more about the word **vehicle**. Children might think about types of vehicles (buses, cars, trucks, boats), uses for vehicles (transportation, recreation), and words describing how vehicles look and move (sturdy, fast, dangerous).

  Then ask your child to write the words on the sheet and connect them to the main word **vehicle**. This will show your child how the words are linked ot the main word and form a "word web."



Lessons Learned

An important part of reading is guessing what the lesson or theme of a story is.

What you'll need:

- ☐ A collection of fables from the library.

What to do:

- ☐ Choose a short fable to read to your child. Read the story but stop before you get to the moral at the end of the story. Ask your child to state what lesson the story has to tell. Then read the moral (usually the last line of a fable).
- ☐ At the end of this game, talk to your child about the story. Were there any surprises in the story?

Favorite Writers

Children who read a great deal often have favorite writers. These writers become favorites because of clever ways they use language or special story lines they develop.

What you'll need:

- ● Several books by your child's favorite writer. A notebook.

What to do:

- ☐ Have your child check out from the library several books by a favorite writer. As your child reads each book, have the child jot down in a small notebook interesting phrases, or sentences, and special observations the author makes.
- ☐ Skim one or more of the books yourself, and read to your child some phrases you like in the author's words.

The Moose Cafe

Opportunities for reading and writing are all around us—even when the subject is food.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What you'll need:

- ☐ Menus.

What to do:

- ☐ Go with your child to several restaurants to ask for free copies of their menus. Take them home. Ask your child to read several of the items on each menu with their descriptions.

  Then ask your child to make up a menu for an imaginary restaurant--the Moose Cafe or the Tuna Bake Bistro--with creative descriptions.

My Turn, Your Turn--Our Story

Writing stories is fun, but it really comes alive when your child creates and writes a story with you.

What you'll need:

- ☐ Paper, pencil, and a story title.

What to do:

- ☐ Create or choose an exciting title for a story you would like to write with your child, such as "The Golden Eye" or "Suddenly Midnight and Silence." Write the title on a sheet of paper and invite your child to write the first sentence. You write the second line. Take turns writing sentences until the story is complete.

- ☐ When the story is finished, invite the family to a story-reading session, or read the story to the family during dinner.

The Dictionary Game

Working with reference books like a dictionary is important to learning about words.

What you'll need:

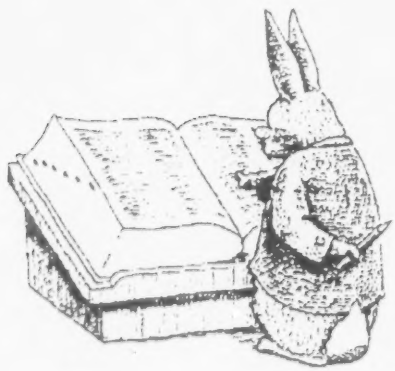
- ☐ Paper, pencil, a dictionary, and the list of questions given below, each written on a separate piece of paper.

What to do:

- ☐ Fold each question in half and put them all in a hat. Ask your child to read a question and then use the dictionary to answer it.

  Is a **burnoose** the cousin of a **moose**?
  Can you **bustle**, **hustle**, and **jostle** at the same time?
  Is a **hog** likely to **hog** all the **hogmeat**?
  How much **bread** is there in **breadfruit**?
  Is it possible for a **fowl** to have a **jowl**?
  Can a **gnu** be a **guru** to a few?
  Is a **lingbird** likely to **linger** long on a clothesline?
  Are **calligraphy** and **otography** the same?
  Can you **abandon** an **abalone**?
  Can an **ermine** be a **hermit**?
  Explain why we drive on a **parkway** and park on a **driveway**.
  Can a **sphinx** put a **jinx** on you?

- ☐ Once your child answers these questions, ask your child to develop some questions for you, using challenging words from the dictionary.



Journey Journal

A journal is an excellent way for your child to write about everyday events and to record thoughts. It is fun to keep a journal when on a special trip.

What you'll need:

- ☐ Journals or notebooks and pencils for you and your child.

What to do:

- ☐ Plan a special trip with your child to a museum, zoo, sports game, or other place of special interest to your child. Ask your child to take along a journal to use for noting interesting things seen or heard.

  Tell your child you are taking a journal too, so that you also can write about your experiences. Compare your journals throughout the day, and especially at the end of the journey.

Family Words Matter

Reading and writing can enable family members to share important life stories.

What you'll need:

- ☐ Letters from grandparents or other family members.

What to do:

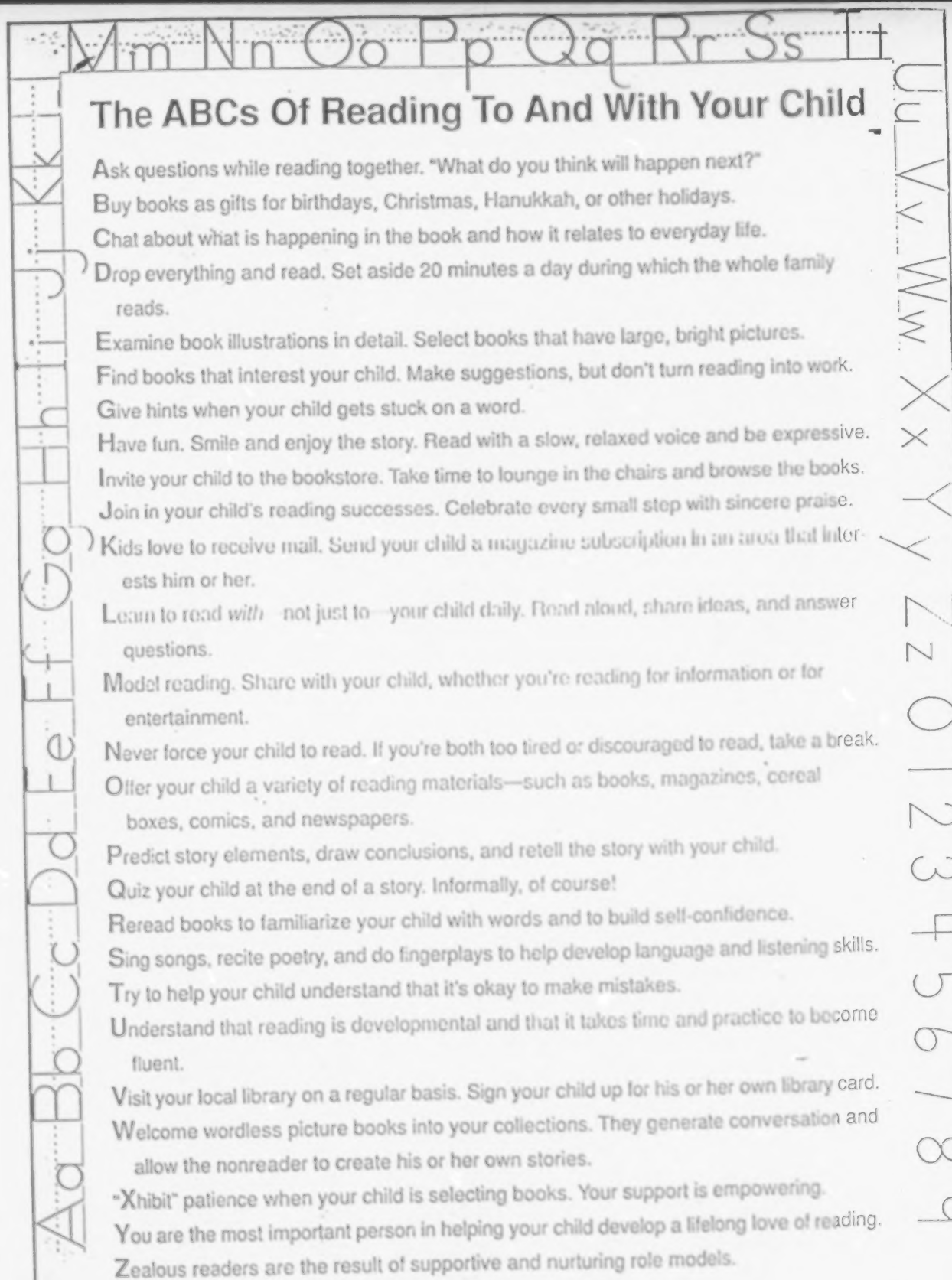
- ☐ Select a family member whom your child knows well and likes. Ask the family member to write a letter to your child. The letter should tell a story, funny event, or something about your child.

  When your child receives the letter, have the child read the letter. Ask your child to write a return letter to the family member, telling a story or something about the family member that the family has told the child.

- ☐ Repeat the letter with another family member.

APPENDIX G

WEEK TWELVE PARENT INFORMATION - THE ABC'S OF READING



The ABCs Of Reading To And With Your Child

Ask questions while reading together. "What do you think will happen next?"

Buy books as gifts for birthdays, Christmas, Hanukkah, or other holidays.

Chat about what is happening in the book and how it relates to everyday life.

Drop everything and read. Set aside 20 minutes a day during which the whole family reads.

Examine book illustrations in detail. Select books that have large, bright pictures.

Find books that interest your child. Make suggestions, but don't turn reading into work.

Give hints when your child gets stuck on a word.

Have fun. Smile and enjoy the story. Read with a slow, relaxed voice and be expressive.

Invite your child to the bookstore. Take time to lounge in the chairs and browse the books.

Join in your child's reading successes. Celebrate every small step with sincere praise.

Kids love to receive mail. Send your child a magazine subscription in an area that interests him or her.

Learn to read *with*—not just to—your child daily. Read aloud, share ideas, and answer questions.

Model reading. Share with your child, whether you're reading for information or for entertainment.

Never force your child to read. If you're both too tired or discouraged to read, take a break.

Offer your child a variety of reading materials—such as books, magazines, cereal boxes, comics, and newspapers.

Predict story elements, draw conclusions, and retell the story with your child.

Quiz your child at the end of a story. Informally, of course!

Reread books to familiarize your child with words and to build self-confidence.

Sing songs, recite poetry, and do fingerplays to help develop language and listening skills.

Try to help your child understand that it's okay to make mistakes.

Understand that reading is developmental and that it takes time and practice to become fluent.

Visit your local library on a regular basis. Sign your child up for his or her own library card.

Welcome wordless picture books into your collections. They generate conversation and allow the nonreader to create his or her own stories.

"Xhibit" patience when your child is selecting books. Your support is empowering.

You are the most important person in helping your child develop a lifelong love of reading.

Zealous readers are the result of supportive and nurturing role models.

©The Education Center, Inc. • *The MAILBOX® Booklog™* • Dec/Jan 1998–99

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX H

BOOK REVIEW CONFERENCE FORM

The Book Review Conference

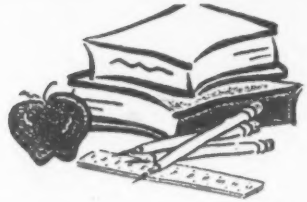
Rubric				
Characters	Setting	Sequence	Moral	Genre
2 – Names all characters 1 – Names 1 or 2 main characters 0 – Cannot name any characters	2 – Names 2 or more locations 1 – Names only 1 location 0 – Cannot name location	2 – Can recall beginning, middle and end of story 1 – Can recall beginning and end of story 0 – Cannot recall any sequence	2 – Applies to real life and provides examples 1 – Applies to real life 0 – Cannot apply to real life	2 – Can name the correct genre and provides examples 1 – Can name the correct genre 0 – Cannot name the correct genre

Name of Student and Book	Characters	Setting	Sequence	Moral	Genre	Total Points	Final Grade
1						0	
2						0	
3						0	
4						0	
5						0	
6						0	
7						0	
8						0	
9						0	
10						0	
11						0	
12						0	
13						0	
14						0	
15						0	
16						0	
17						0	
18						0	
19						0	
20						0	
21						0	
22						0	
23						0	
24						0	
25						0	
Class Average	0	0	0	0	0	0	

APPENDIX I

FRIDAY ACTIVITIES FORM

Friday Activities



Name:

ACTIVITY	COMPLETED						
Character Map							
Create a new book cover							
Write a retelling of the story: Written in your own words on paper							
Do a story on a rope							
Complete a book report form							
Create 5-8 questions about your book							
Illustrate your favorite part of the book and write a few sentences about it.							

APPENDIX J

CHARACTER MAP FORM

Character Map

Draw a picture of the main character in the middle and write three adjectives. In the other circles do the same with the supporting characters. HAVE FUN

APPENDIX K

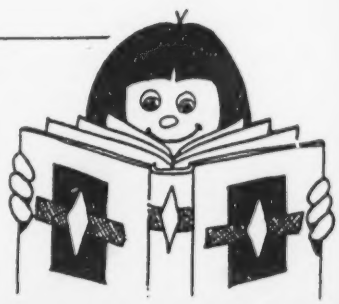
RETELLING FORM

A retelling of the book:

_____

Retold by:

_____



APPENDIX L

BOOK REPORT FORM

Book Report Form

Title:_____ Author:_____

Number of pages:_____ Copyright date:_____

Setting:_____

Main Character (s)_____

Supporting Characters (s)_____

_____

Main idea of the story:_____

_____

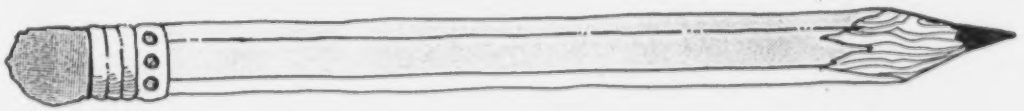
List any problems found in the story:_____

_____

The solution to the problem was:_____

_____

Your recommendation for this book:_____



APPENDIX M

CREATE QUESTIONS FORM

Create 5 - 8 questions about one of the books you read this week.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

5. _____

_____

6. _____

_____

7. _____

_____

8. _____

_____

APPENDIX N

MY FAVORITE PART FORM

My favorite part of the book:

APPENDIX O

SILENT SUSTAINED READING LOG

Name: _____

INDEPENDENT READING RECORD

Title of Book	Author	Date

APPENDIX P

COMPUTER USAGE LOG

Computer Usage Log for the Week of_____

Student Name	Software Program Used	Minutes

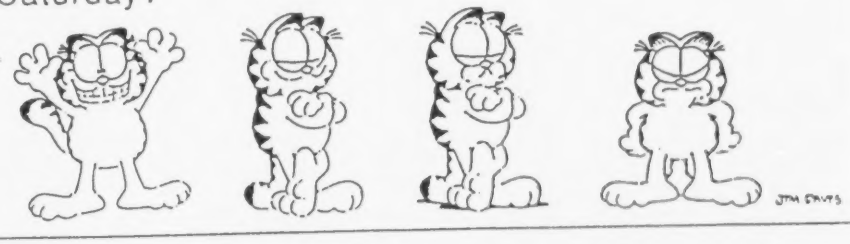
APPENDIX Q

GARFIELD READING SURVEY

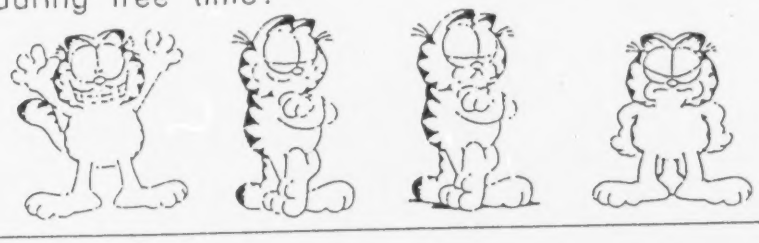
ELEMENTARY READING ATTITUDE SURVEY

School_____ Grade___ Name_____

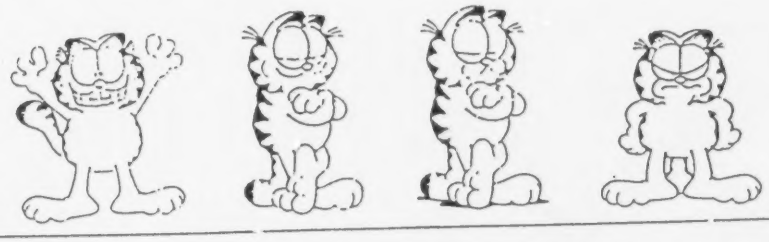
1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?



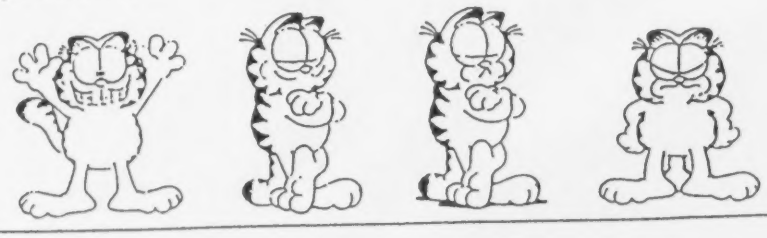
2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?



3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?



4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?

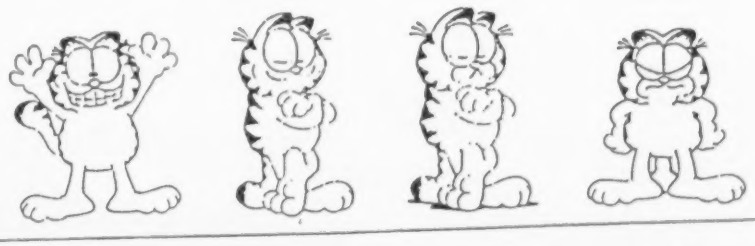


BEST COPY AVAILABLE

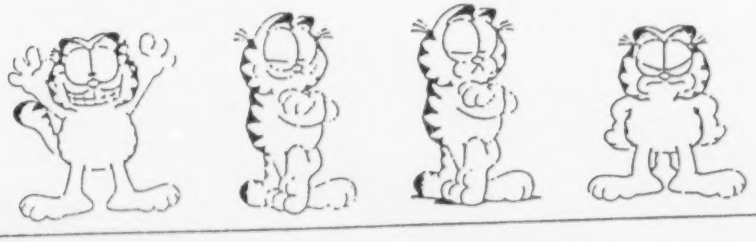
The GARFIELD character is incorporated in this test with the permission of United Feature Syndicate, Inc., 200 Park Ave., New York, NY 10166; the character may be reproduced only in connection with reproduction of the test in its entirety for classroom use prior to December 31, 1995, and any other reproductions or uses without the express prior written consent of UFS are prohibited. Note that this date is subject to extension. To determine if an extension is in effect, contact Michael C. McKenna, Georgia Southern University, or Dennis J. Kear, Wichita State University.

GARFIELD © 1978 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

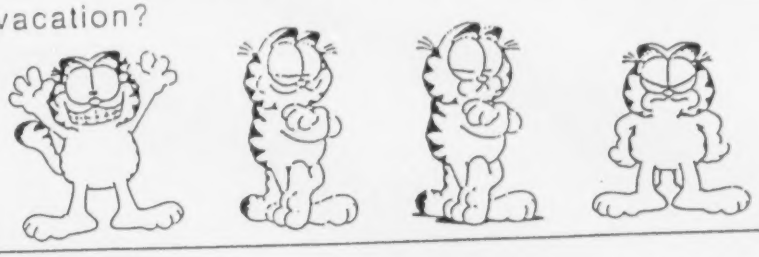
5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?



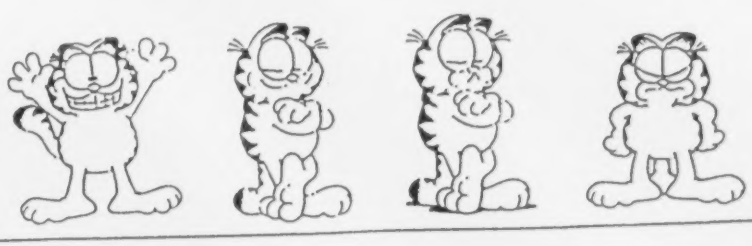
6. How do you feel about starting a new book?



7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?



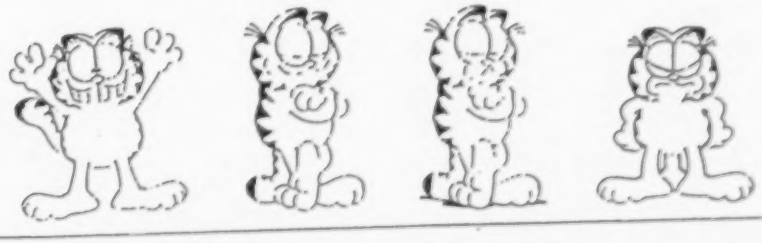
8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?



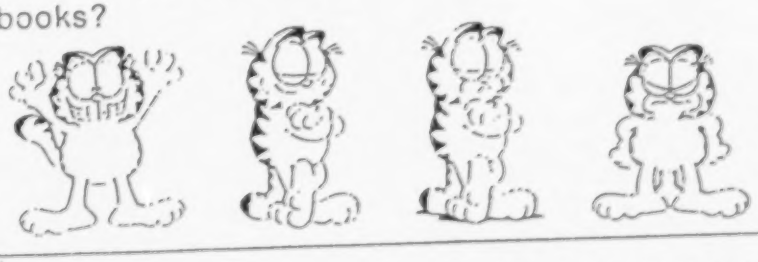
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

GARFIELD © 1978 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

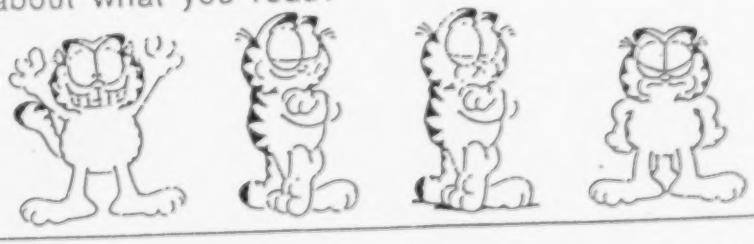
9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?



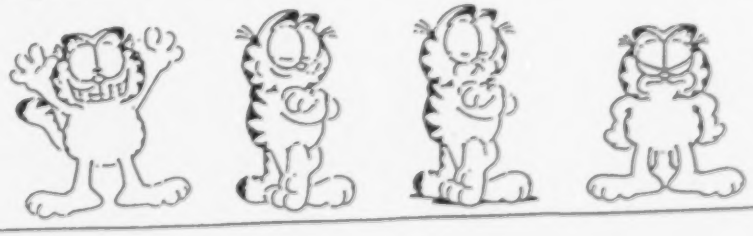
10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?



11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?

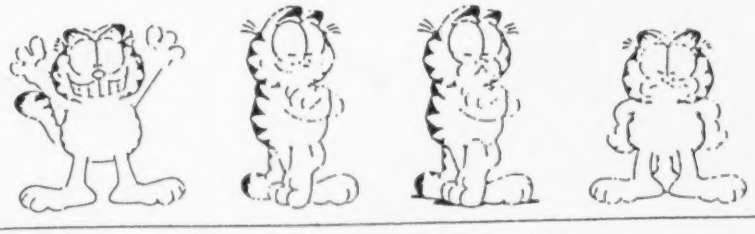


12. How do you feel about doing reading workbook pages and worksheets?

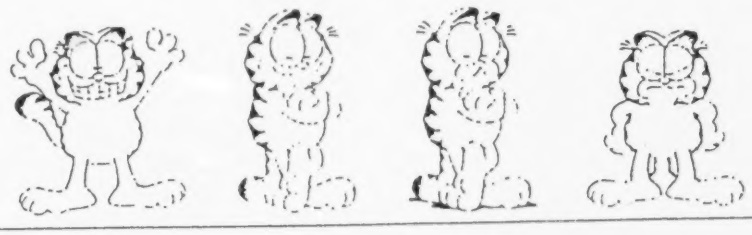


BEST COPY AVAILABLE

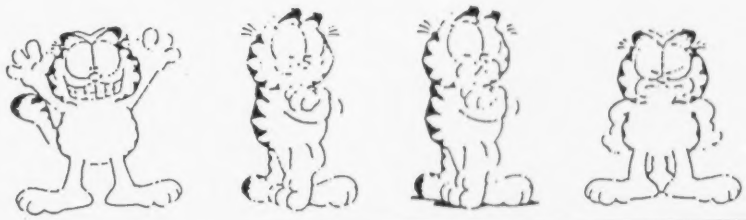
13. How do you feel about reading in school?



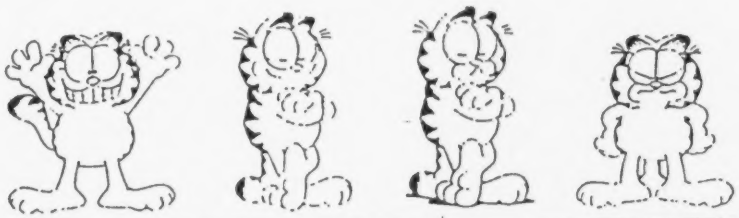
14. How do you feel about reading your school books?



15. How do you feel about learning from a book?



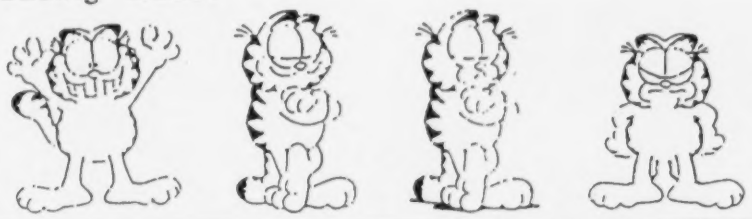
16. How do you feel when it's time for reading class?



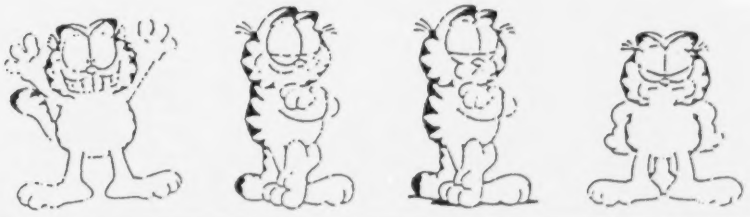
GARFIELD © 1978 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

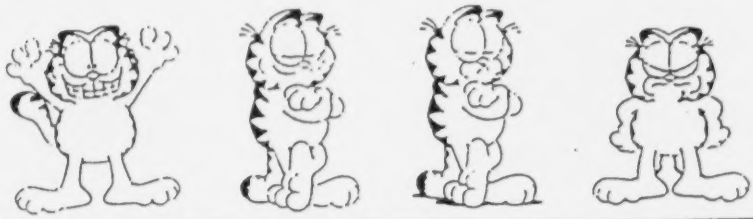
17. How do you feel about the stories you read in reading class?



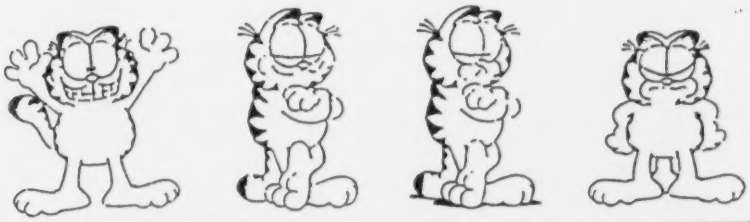
18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?



19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?



20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey
Scoring sheet

Student name _____

Teacher _____

Grade _____ Administration date _____

Scoring guide		
4	points	Happiest Garfield
3	points	Slightly smiling Garfield
2	points	Mildly upset Garfield
1	point	Very upset Garfield

Recreational reading

1. ____
2. ____
3. ____
4. ____
5. ____
6. ____
7. ____
8. ____
9. ____
10. ____

Raw score: ____

Academic reading

11. ____
12. ____
13. ____
14. ____
15. ____
16. ____
17. ____
18. ____
19. ____
20. ____

Raw score: ____

Full scale raw score (Recreational + Academic): _____

Percentile ranks

Recreational	
Academic	
Full scale	

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX R

FROG AND TOAD RUNNING RECORD

Page	Frog and Toad All Year (The Corner) page 1	Errors	Self-Corrections	Cues Used E	Cues Used SC
pg 18	Frog and Toad				
	were caught in the rain.				
	They ran to Frog's house.				
	"I am all wet," said Toad.				
	"The day is spoiled."				
	"Have some tea and cake,"				
	said Frog. "The ~~ran~~ you will stop.				
	If you stand near the stove,				
	your clothes will soon be dry.				
19	I will tell you a story				
	while we are waiting," said Frog.				
	"Oh good," said Toad.				
pg 20	"When I was small,				
	not much bigger				
	than a pollywog," said Frog,				
	"my father said to me,				
	'Son, this is a cold, gray day				
	but spring				
	is just around the corner.'				

Total 93 words

Page:	Frog and Toad All Year (The Corner) page 2	Errors	Self-Corrections	Cues Used E SC
pg 21	I wanted spring to come.			
	I went out			
	to find that corner.			
	I walked down a path in the woods			
	until I came to a corner.			
	I went around the corner			
	to see if spring			
	was on the other side."			
pg 22	"And was it?" asked Toad.			
	"No," said Frog.			
	"There was only a pine tree,			
	three pebbles			
	and some dry grass.			

Total 60 words

Page	Frog and Toad All Year (The Corner) page 3	Errors	Self-Corrections	Cues Used E	Cues Used SC
pg 23	I walked				
	in the meadow.				
	Soon I came to				
	another corner.				
	I went around the corner				
	to see if spring was there."				
	"Did you find it?" asked Toad.				
	"No," said Frog.				
	"There was only				
	an old worm				
	asleep on a				
	tree stump."				
pg 24	"I walked along the river				
	until I came to				
	another corner.				
	I went around the corner				
	to look for spring."				
	"Was it there?" asked Toad.				

Total 67 words

APPENDIX S

LITTLE RED ROTTEN HOOD RUNNING RECORD

Page	Little Red Rotten Hood (page 1)	Errors	Self-Corrections	Cues Used E	Cues Used SC
pg 275	Once there was a wolf. He lived in a cave in a forest. He was a fairly nice animal. He didn't growl or scratch anyone or anything unless they hurt him first. He is jumping				
pg 276	Back at the other side of the forest was a different story. A house stood back there, the house of Little Red Rotten Hood, (known as an animal hater.) All the animals watched out for her.				
pg 277	One day Little Red Rotten Hood's aunt telephoned her and told her she was sick, her voice <u>was</u> hoarse. All that Little Red Rotten Hood said was, "So."				

Total 98 words

APPENDIX T

COME BACK AMELIA BEDELIA RUNNING RECORD

Come Back, Amelia Bedelia
Running Record
Pages 20-25

The beauty shop lady came. "Oh, no!" she said. "What have you done? Go away right this minute."

"All right," said Amelia Bedelia. So Amelia Bedelia went on her way. "Now why did she get so mad?" said Amelia Bedelia. "I just did what she told me to do."

Amelia Bedelia looked in all the stores. She came to a dress shop. It had HELP WANTED sign in the window.

Amelia Bedelia went into the store. "What kind of help is wanted?" she asked.

"Sewing help," said the lady. "Can you sew?"

"Yes," said Amelia Bedelia. "I am very handy with a needle."

APPENDIX U

IT'S THANKSGIVING RUNNING RECORD

Name_____ Date_____
It's Thanksgiving – Pages 33-35
(102 words, 132 syllables, 3 sentences)

I ate too much turkey,
I ate too much corn,
I ate too much pudding and pie,
I'm stuffed up with muffins
And much too much stuffin',
I'm probably going to die.

I piled up my plate
And I ate and I ate,
But I wish I had know when to stop,
For I'm so crammed with yams,
Sauces, gravies, and jams
That my buttons are starting to pop.
I'm full of tomatoes and french fried potatoes,
My stomach is swollen and sore,
But there's still some dessert,
so I guess it won't hurt
If I eat just a little bit more.

APPENDIX V

ARTHUR MAKES THE TEAM RUNNING RECORD

Arthur Makes the Team (page 36-37)
Reading level 3.0 according to book.
Reading level mid second according to Fry

"It's painful," Francine was saying.
She was sitting in her living room with
Muffy. "What's painful?" Muffy asked.
"No, don't tell me. It has something
to do with baseball."

Francine was surprised. "How did you
know?" she asked.
"Because that's all you talk about lately.
Double plays...making the cutoff...
guarding the plate."

"Well, it's important," said Francine.
Muffy yawned. "Not to me. I could
understand it better if you thought your
team was any good."

Francine punched her pillow.
"Don't remind me. Buster can't throw.
The brain takes too long for everything.
And as for Arthur...." She shook her head.

APPENDIX W

RUN AWAY RALPH RUNNING RECORD

Suddenly Ralph was angry. He was furious at the way his old friend had treated him. He would show Matt that he could manage without help. Matt would come out in the morning expecting to find Ralph waiting to be let in, but Ralph would fool him. He wouldn't be waiting, and there wouldn't be any broken motorcycle at the foot of the steps either.

Ralph set about finding a solution to his problem. He looked at the ghostly rocking chairs, the cracked concrete porch, the steps, and the asphalt driveway below. Once Ralph had taken the trouble to look, the solution to getting his motorcycle down the steps seemed surprisingly easy.

APPENDIX X

OTHERWISE KNOWN AS SHEILA THE GREAT RUNNING RECORD

"You are a crybaby!" mouse told her. "And I don't see what business is it of yours that my bellybutton sticks out."

"I didn't write that!" Sondra said. "I wrote about your ears."

"Well, that's just as dumb!"

"I'm the one who wrote about your bellybutton," Jane said. "And it does stick out! So there!"

"Just shut up, Jane!" Mouse hollered.

Jane was standing near my dresser and when Mouse said that Jane picked up one of Bobby Egran's model airplanes and threw it across the room at her. "Who's going to make me?" she asked.

"You cut that out!" I told her. "They're not mine."

APPENDIX Y

THE APPRENTICESHIP OF LUCAS WHITAKER RUNNING RECORD

William Sheldon was one of the first to arrive. Behind him in the wagon, bundled against the damp chill under layers of quilts, lay a woman Lucas guessed was his wife Lavinia. William turned to her and spoke, and Lucas heard her cough weakly in response.

More people came, struggling through the mud and rain, some on foot, some on horseback, others, as sick as Lavinia Sheldon, lying in the backs of wagons. Most were strangers to Lucas, but he saw a few people he knew. Eben Oaks, James Freeman, and several other men were carrying wood and stacking it in a pyramid shaped pile in the center of the square.

APPENDIX Z

RUNNING RECORD RECORDING SHEET

RUNNING RECORD SHEET

Name: _____ Date: _____ D.of B.: _____ Age: ___yrs___mths
School: _____ Recorder: _____ Grade: ___

Text Titles	Running words / Error	Error rate	Accuracy	Self-correction rate
1. Independent	_____	1: _____	_____%	1: _____
2. Instructional	_____	1: _____	_____%	1: _____
3. Frustration	_____	1: _____	_____%	1: _____

Directional movement _____

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections
Information used or neglected {Meaning (M) Structure or Syntax (S) Visual (V)}

Independent _____

Instructional _____

_____

Frustration _____

_____

Cross-checking on information (Note that this behavior changes over time)

_____

_____

CONVENTIONS

* Accurate Reading ✓ ✓ ✓

* Omission – (very)

* Substitution went (want) child (text)

* Pause (W) (w) (want)

* Repetition (R) R or ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ R

* Insertion went ^ (want)

* Self-Correction (SC) went / sc (want)

* Told T (want)

Comments on Comprehension: _____

_____

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX AA

PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE PARENT LETTER

November 1998

Dear Parents,

In my classroom this year, I am very excited about implementing my Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership project. This project incorporates a plan to improve student reading comprehension and vocabulary development. This project is in conjunction with my master's degree program from St. Xavier University. During the project I will be working with three colleagues who may be joining our class for observation or implementation of various strategies.

Throughout the duration of this project I will be requesting your support and assistance in completing a survey and monitoring your child's home reading program. I will also be sending home suggestions and information regarding strategies to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary development.

As part of this project, my professional portfolio will include lesson plans, reflections, artifacts, videos and pictures from my classroom. If you do not want information collected about your child to be included in the project kindly notify me. Please be assured that strict student confidentiality will be maintained. As data is collected and recorded, no student names will be included. Lack of participation in the project will not affect the quality of services your child receives in my classroom.

I look forward to working with you and your child on this project. I hope it will prove to be a very beneficial and rewarding experience for all of us. I have discussed the plans for this research project with my principal and will continue to keep her informed as the year progresses.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your valuable time and effort.

Sincerely,

Heidi Pride
2nd Grade Teacher

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

November 1998

Dear Parents,

In my classroom this year, I am very excited about implementing my Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership project. This project incorporates a plan to improve student reading comprehension and vocabulary development. This project is in conjunction with my master's degree program from St. Xavier University. During the project I will be working with three colleagues who may be joining our class for observation or implementation of various strategies.

Throughout the duration of this project I will be requesting your support and assistance in completing a survey and monitoring your child's home reading program. I will also be sending home suggestions and information regarding strategies to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary development.

As part of this project, my professional portfolio will include lesson plans, reflections, artifacts, videos and pictures from my classroom. If you do not want information collected about your child to be included in the project kindly notify me. Please be assured that strict student confidentiality will be maintained. As data is collected and recorded, no student names will be included. Lack of participation in the project will not affect the quality of services your child receives in my classroom.

I look forward to working with you and your child on this project. I hope it will prove to be a very beneficial and rewarding experience for all of us. I have discussed the plans for this research project with my principal and will continue to keep her informed as the year progresses.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your valuable time and effort.

Sincerely,

Tammy Ortmann

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

January 4, 1999

Dear Parents,

As mentioned at Fall conferences, I am preparing to begin my research project for my master's program. As part of this program, I am asking each parent to fill out weekly reading logs for at home reading. I understand that everyone is very busy with family activities, sports, additional homework and other outside responsibilities. However, I feel home reading is an essential part of a child's academic development in reading. I am interested in seeing how consistent home reading influences growth and development.

We will be keeping reading logs for the remainder of the school year. Please record the title and the author of each book. I am asking that we set a goal of 100 minutes per week. This can be divided up any way you want. Either you or your child may fill out the sheet; however, I would ask that you keep this in a visible spot in the house such as the refrigerator. I encourage you to include any personal comments (i.e. great books to read, problems encountered, questions you may have, or general comments). It is very important that these forms are returned weekly with your signature. Please send in the reading logs every Monday. We would like to see 100% of the forms being returned each week. If you are having a hectic week and don't fulfill the required 100 minutes per week, please send in the reading log anyway.

You will be receiving additional information throughout the semester with hot tips or suggestions to enhance your home reading program. We want reading to be fun as well as a rewarding educational experience for you and your family. If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call at school.

Sincerely,

Mr. Iddings

BEST COPY AVAILABLE